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ACCOUNT
OF THE
STATE OF FRANCE,
&c. &c. &c.



ACCOUNT
OF THE
STATE OF FRANCE,
AND ITS
GOVERNMENT,
DURING
THE LAST THREE YEARS;
PARTICULARLY
AS IT HAS RELATION TO THE BELGIC
PROVINCES,
AND THE
TREATMENT OF THE ENGLISH.

BY ISRAEL WORSLEY,
DETAINED AS A HOSTAGE.

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ACCOUNT
OF THE
STATE OF FRANCE,
&c. &c.

CHAPTER I.

Account of the Author—Englishmen arrested—Reasons assigned for their Arrest—Ambiguity of the Decree—Different Ways of executing it—Account of the Author continued.

THE writer of the following pages has lately quitted France, where he had established a school immediately after the revolution. He had found it necessary, however, to return to England, when the perpetual changes of the French government, and the severe measures of its rulers, threat-

ened the whole republic with dissolution. The peace of Amiens furnished an opportunity of resuming his interesting employment, in which he had been flattered by the prospect of the most brilliant success, and to which he was again called by the wishes of his former friends and supporters. Scarcely, however, had he resumed his station, when the decree of Buonaparte respecting the arrest of the English was promulgated, and he, with others, became prisoners of the state. As the government had held out every encouragement to houses of education, and in many cases, where the respectability of the teachers justified it, had given out of the national domains, premises suitable to their purpose, free of rent, it was presumed that an establishment like his would have been rather the object of their care than of their cen-

sure, and the officer of police scrupled not to declare, immediately upon his apprehension, that he could by no means consider him as intended by government to be included among the arrested English. The decree was executed by the military, which excited the jealousy of the civil power, and, in other cases, as well as in this, the rising influence of the army created much disorder and many embarrassments in executing the orders of government. But as a more complete idea of these embarrassments will be formed by an enumeration of them, and as the reader will become better acquainted with the treatment of the English in general, from the manner in which individuals were used, it may be advisable to state particularly the scenes through which the author of the ensuing work was made to pass from this beginning of

his sorrows to the moment when he made his escape.

The arrest of the English began directly after the capture of the French merchant ships by order of the English ministry, and without any declaration of war. The only reprisal which the grand consul had in his power to make, was the seizure of the persons of the British subjects who were then on the French territory. Without stopping to inquire into the legitimacy or expediency of the measure, it may be observed, that no law of nations will justify it, no precedent of a civilized nation will warrant it, nor has it found any advocates even amongst the subjects of the emperor. They stigmatize without scruple his conduct as unwise, and condemn it as inhuman. He was undoubtedly urged to it by a spirit of revenge against a power which had acted, as

he thought, unfairly by his subjects, and reeked that revenge upon a set of men who, he presumed, were dear to their country, and perhaps thought, that should the misunderstanding be of a short duration, he could exchange one unlawful seizure for another. Such appears to have been the first pretence for their arrest; afterwards another and very different reason was assigned for this measure. When the descent upon England was seriously intended, and it was supposed that the fury of the English would overcome every other principle, and that all their prisoners would be sacrificed to their indignation, Buonaparte was said to retain the hostages as a security for the lives of his own people, and to have determined upon making the former suffer whatever evils might fall to the lot of the latter. In

this apprehension, the English in France were, for a considerable time, rendered extremely unhappy; for dear as their own lives were to themselves and families, they could not but hope that every Frenchman who landed in their country might find a grave there, rather than be the means of introducing the confusion and misery that had already followed every where in their train.

The order for arresting the English, when issued, was not at all understood. It must have been expressed in an ambiguous way, or it could not have been executed so variously by the different constituted authorities. In some places, all the English indiscriminately were arrested; in some, all that had entered the country since the peace of Amiens; and in others, only those who were without a fixed habitation, or ostensible means of support by their for-

tune or industry. In some towns the men only were arrested; in others, entire families were obliged to go away to the dépôt. The author was at this time at Dunkirk, where he had gone in order to establish his seminary of learning, a second time, since the peace of Amiens; but no sooner had he become the prisoner of the military power, than the police officer interfered, and insisted upon his being set at liberty, because he had resided so long at Dunkirk before, and was so well known both personally and by the useful establishment which he had formed. After this the alarm of the English increased every day, and new fears were added to those of the day before. At first a written engagement was given by every individual, that he would not go beyond the walls of the town without the express per-

mission of the commandant ; but afterwards they began to send them away to Valenciennes.

The author, upon this, was strongly advised by his friends to quit the coast, before measures more severe were enforced, and to retire into the interior, where the importance of his school to the place in which he should live might secure every exertion of the magistrates for his protection ; for it was presumed, that the orders for the port-towns would be more severe than those of the towns within land. He chose, therefore, Ardres, a small fortified town, at nearly an equal distance from Dunkirk, Calais, Boulogne, and St. Omar's, peculiarly well situated for a school, on a fine healthy spot, and where provisions were very cheap.

He hired a large building, *a ci-devant abbaye*, for the small sum of twelve pounds per annum. In the middle of

June, 1803, he removed thither, and had the pleasure to see his numbers increase, notwithstanding the unfavourableness of the times and the immense losses sustained in the neighbouring ports by all the principal merchants. Five weeks after, however, he received an order from the gendarmes to quit the place, and repair to Valenciennes. This injunction was not accompanied by an arrest, nor was the day mentioned when he was to set out on his journey.

His boarders went home ; and while preparations were making for his departure, a friend happening to be at Calais, met with a letter, which the grand juge (chief justice) had just addressed to the sub-prefet: in this he reprobated, in strong terms, the measures that had been taken in that town, and at Boulogne, against the English settlers ; and declared autho-

ritatively, that it never was the intention of the government to unsettle, or give any disturbance to, those who conducted manufactories, or had formed useful establishments in the country. The author was judged to be among the latter of these, and himself received the sanction of the magistrates to remain where he was, with the assurance, that he had now nothing to fear.

His boarders came back ; some new ones were added ; and once more the wheel was set to work : but it was not to go long ; for at the end of three weeks, an absolute order came down, that he should leave Ardres in twenty-four hours for Valenciennes. This decree being more positive than the other, and addressed to him by name, the gendarmes insisted on the execution of it.

Mrs. Worsley was but imperfectly

recovered from a long and alarming illness, and actually in danger of another ; herself ignorant of the language, with no servant that could speak it, and her children too young to render her any assistance ; to which it must be added, that she was of a nervous habit, and her family fast increasing. With his affairs in this state, the author was to march away without any preparation, and to leave his school as it was ; nor did the magistrates dare to soften, even by a short respite, the rigour of the sentence.

He took proper documents from the mayor and the physician, and went off the same evening for Arras, where the *prefet* resided, the only person whose authority could then render him any service. He asked the delay of a fortnight, that he might put his affairs into a proper train, and conduct his

family in some comfort to the place of their destined imprisonment. The prefet granted it without any hesitation, and expressed his surprise that the mayor had suffered him to come so far, in order to obtain what the eternal laws of humanity enjoined, "which," he observed, "had always existed, and would always exist, whatever the governors of any country might ordain." He regretted the necessity he was under of refusing to authorize his stay in the department, for he had received from the consul a positive injunction not to suffer an Englishman to remain there.

The author returned to Ardres, sent home his boarders a second time, and directed the public sale of his effects. A week after a letter came from the gendarmerie, purporting that he was not to be sent away. But after so

many disappointments, he did not choose to expose himself to additional evils ; having already experienced, that as confidence could not be placed in the stability of his establishment, parents were not willing to put their children under his care. A number of persons were then waiting to see the issue of this embarrassed affair ; and he was well assured, by respectable friends, who interested themselves greatly in his success, because they conceived the welfare of the town allied to it, that a considerable number of young persons waited only the assurance of his security, in order to enter his house. He had the pleasure of knowing that he had obtained the confidence of the neighbourhood, and only wanted stability to insure success. He took the advantage, however, of this occurrence in his favour to procure a passport for

the department of Jemappes, in which a friend resided, from whose influence he hoped to derive some valuable assistance in providing for a numerous family.

CHAPTER II.

Author's Arrival in the Department of Jemappes, and subsequent Treatment—Daughter of Jean de Brie—Author's Confinement in the Prison of Mons, and March to Verdun—General Rey—Amiable Characters of General Wirion and Major Courcelles—Account of Verdun, and Treatment of the English there.

ABOUT the end of September, the author with his family arrived at Mons, which is situated between Valenciennes and Brussels. It is a large well-built town, and was formerly rich. Here he remained three months, undisturbed, the number of his children was increased, and their mother beginning to recover her strength, when, without the smallest previous intimation, or any reason being assigned for it, he was arrested, and detained in the custody of a gendarme.

In a few days some friends were admitted as sureties for his appearance, and he got rid of his soldier, who had guarded him by night and by day, and whom he was required to feed and pay handsomely for his time. A month elapsed without any news from the Minister. At the end of December an order came down, that he should be conveyed away to Verdun, which had then become the receptacle of those Englishmen who had the means of supporting themselves without the assistance of the government.

During the last months he had become acquainted with an excellent woman, a young widow of two and twenty, the daughter of the well known Jean de Brie, whose life was almost miraculously saved, when the other deputies to the congress of Radstadt were murdered by the Austrian troops. The news of his arrest became the

common subject of conversation. This lady first heard of it at the theatre in the evening, and endued with too much sensibility to witness a common calamity unmoved, one so uncommon and so unmerited as this, excited her indignation and her pity to so high a degree, that she was taken seriously ill in her box, and did not for some time overcome the shock. She was one of the richest and most esteemed persons in the town, and without delay set every engine to work for his release. The kindness of this good woman, the constant sisterly attention she paid his wife while he was in captivity, and after his return, and the delicate manner in which she made several useful presents to the family, will ever remain deeply engraven on their memories.

The author had been conducted to the prison of the town, where he remained closely confined for three days.

He had a miserable bed without furniture to lie upon, in a room about six feet square, the window of which still bore marks of the violence of mischievous boys ; and for this indulgence he paid sufficiently dear.

On the last day of the year, when the ground was drenched by successive rains, the roads wretchedly bad, and the days at the shortest, he was marched away, accompanied by a *gendarme*, to the province of the ancient Champagne. The most trying scene in which he was called to share was in the prison of Mons. Not allowed to quit it for a moment, to make up a little package for his journey, and bid his family adieu, he was visited by a part of it the evening before his departure, in the painful uncertainty of not seeing them again as long as the war should last, or of their being obliged to make a long, expensive, and embar-

passing journey after him to Verdun, without his assistance and support. On this occasion, for the first time in his life, he found himself completely unmanned; but the recollection of the virtue and force of fortitude soon restored him to himself. His friends also spoke with a confidence, on which he feared to rely, of his speedy return.

“ The vine-covered hills and gay regions of France” appeared to him sad and joyless. In five days, by sharp marches, and at the expense of not only the moisture of his joints, but also of the skin of his feet, and, he may also add, of the hair of his head, which afterwards fell thick around him, he arrived at his destined post. During this time friends had been busy to obtain his release. The prefet of the department of Jemappes had supported, with all his influence, an ad-

dress he had sent up to the minister, in which he was represented as a manufacturer of considerable utility to the town of Mons, having introduced a new species of industry, employed a considerable number of hands, and become essentially serviceable to the poor. This was backed by a gentleman who held a distinguished rank in the office of the minister of the interior, who had been educated in the family of Jean de Brie, and who followed up the business so well, that in a week after the arrest, an order was issued from the bureau of the formidable Berthier for his discharge. But he was not so soon to be in the bosom of his family.

The execution of the order of arrest, and the subsequent measures, seem to have been much more prompt than the minister himself had expected ; for the counter-order was dispatched to Mons, addressed to the general of division,

on the presumption that the author was still there. This man, of mean birth and brutal character, forms a perfect contrast to the worthy female character of whom we have just spoken with delight. The general behaviour of the one to all who came near him displayed the gall of bitterness that was incorporated in his frame ; none could seek relief from the other, or even know her, without acknowledging that the milk of human kindness seemed to give vigour to all her actions. General Rey had not delayed a moment to distress an innocent family, nor would he moderate that distress in the smallest degree, though wholly in his power, and strongly urged to do so by many respectable persons. And having done thus much, he was equally unsolicitous to remedy the mistake which prolonged the evil, although he could not have failed to have perceived it. The

consequence was, that three months had elapsed at his return to Mons, and then he obtained his release only by the exertions of the gentleman in the office of the minister, who, upon application, found out the error, and had it rectified. During this period he felt strongly what "the sickness of the heart is which arises from hope deferred," not imagining the cause of the delay, and fearing that he had been deceived.

The author ought not to omit in this place the encomiums due to the characters of general Wirion and major Courcelles; the one at the head of the gendarmerie stationed at Verdun, and the other commandant of the town. They never failed to give to the unfortunate English under their care every indulgence of which a jealous and harsh government would allow.

When he complained to the major

of the unnecessarily severe treatment he had met with at Mons, he replied, with great mildness and feeling, " I beg you to think nothing of it. The first orders we received about the English were so worded, that they were capable of the most cruel interpretation, and our prisoners expected the closest imprisonment, and every species of ill usage ; and wept with joy when they found we were men, and ready to treat them with humanity, and even with indulgence. We think them sufficiently unfortunate in being prisoners, and wish always to be regarded as their friends."

All the English were at large within the town from the first hour of their arrival, after having signed a paper which purported that they would not attempt to go without its gates. At Verdun they procured apartments and provisions suitable to their means, and went once

once a day, between nine and twelve, to the town-house, to sign the muster-roll. Those who conducted themselves prudently obtained, under the slightest pretences, a *carte de sortir*, with which they might go out of the town after twelve, and remain in the country till seven in the evening, when an inquiry was made whether they who had been out were returned.

Verdun is an ill-built town, the houses small and low, and all the streets, except one, very narrow. In this are many good houses, and it has been distinguished by the name of Bond-street. The people are in general poor, or rather were so when the English first became their guests. No doubt they are now enriched, for Frenchmen know how to make a great advantage of a small profit. Their extreme frugality and spare diet enable them to make a saving where one of our

people would hardly procure the necessaries of life. They appeared to be honest, and did not discover any particular disposition to impose upon the English, who for the most part were unacquainted with the language, and the value of the articles they had occasion to buy. This may not be, and probably has not been, true of them all; there are many Jews in the place, and no doubt some Christians with avaricious dispositions.

The situation of the town is delightful. In the winter the overflowing of the Meuse, which passes directly through the town, occasions the greater part of an extensive valley to be covered with water; but in the summer, when the river is confined within its banks, and its winding course is seen from the neighbouring hills blushing with the fruit of the vine, it is a highly interesting spot.

The army of "Great Brunswick's Duke" here partook of a short and treacherous banquet; for arriving, on their expeditious march to Paris, amongst the vineyards when the grapes were not fully ripe, they filled themselves with such greediness, and with so little regard to the persons whose property they were devouring, that they were speedily seized with a dysentery, and fell like leaves in autumn.

CHAPTER III.

The Author's Return to Mons, and Exertions to maintain his Family—Base Conduct of Mr. C——r.—C——d's Escape, and the consequent Treatment of his Countrymen—Permission obtained to remove to Amiens, and Departure for Holland—Arrest on the Frontiers, and Escape from his Guards—Arrival in Holland.

AT his return to Mons, the author thought it expedient to justify the pretences of his kind advocates with the minister, by becoming really and bonâ fide a manufacturer.

Nothing was to be done in the way of education. The little learning required by these descendants of the ancient Walloons, who have at no time been ambitious to be wise, was in the hands of their priests, from whom alone it could become esti-

mable. He had found a few scholars to learn the English language; these had been of the natives of France, who held almost all the posts of honour and profit in the department. He had been wholly deceived in the reliance he had placed on his friend, through the means of whom he had chosen his residence at Mons. He began therefore, independently of any other profession, a manufactory of straw hats, which were then coming into use in France. The English ladies who had visited the country during the short interval of peace, had communicated a taste for the straw-work to the Belles of France. When he required permission to travel to other departments, and even to the frontiers of the empire, he obtained it with ease of the *prefet*. But once again his peace was disturbed,

and a worse calamity than the others was likely to befall him from a source to which he had looked for pleasure and friendship.

While at Verdun he became acquainted with a man of the name of C——r. He had been an attorney in England, and is known, it is presumed, at Salisbury, Belle-ricay, and Reading. This man was in a state of mind truly distressing; he was indeed almost distracted. His rolling eyes and wandering air discovered to all who saw him something wrong in his intellect; and yet at times he was a pleasant entertaining companion. We naturally attach ourselves to the partners of our affliction, and cannot help feeling a more than common sympathy, when the evil lies heavier on them than it does on ourselves.

The author became useful to him by necessity.

This gentleman could not speak French ; he was consuming away by his own sadness, and had no friend in whose society he could find relief. By the advice, and indeed at the suggestion of the secretary of General Wirion, the author petitioned the minister that C——r might accompany him to Mons. In this application they were assisted by the general and the physician, who were distressed to see a man dying of *ennui* under their superintendance : a disease which appears to them the more terrible, as it is not frequently seen in their land. Humanity seems to have crept sometimes into the councils of the French directors. Though their general measures, which originated with Buona-

parte, were cruel, many instances occurred of individuals being indulged who were afflicted either in mind or in body. Mr. C——r came to Mons, and with him a woman supposed to be his wife, with a child at the breast.

A very short time discovered that this lady had been mistress to a younger branch of an eminent Jewish family in London, and had served as travelling companion to Mr. C——r, who, to enjoy more completely the luxury of youth and beauty, had left a family unprovided for in his native country. This discovery, together with some keen and well-supported battles, between Mr. C——r and the lady, which made it necessary even for the police to interfere, determined the author upon giving up wholly his acquaintance. It is a little remarkable, that though a prisoner of war him-

self, (for so he was still considered), this man was placed under his responsibility. It was therefore necessary that he should declare to the municipality that he would be no longer answerable in any respect for the behaviour of Mr. C——r.

This was, nevertheless, managed in such a way that no inconvenience might arise to him in consequence of it. He was, however, much irritated against the author for breaking off the acquaintance, and nourished a revenge, which he had no opportunity of manifesting, till the indiscreet letter of an English gentleman, addressed to the minister after a breach of his word of honour given under circumstances of peculiar indulgence, occasioned a government order, that all those Englishmen who enjoyed any privilege as to the place of their residence, in

consequence of illness or infirmity, should be sent back again to Verdun. Mr. C—— was suddenly ordered to return, and no reason assigned for it. The escape of the above-mentioned gentleman was not publicly known, and he supposed that the author had written to the minister about him, and occasioned the order for his new arrest: he therefore denounced him to the general as having proposed to assist him in his escape into Germany for the sum of fifty pounds, to which proposal he had honourably refused to accede. The charge was without the slightest foundation, but now he was regarded as a guilty man, and must inevitably have suffered the heavy vengeance of the minister, if an officer of engineers, an excellent and amiable man, who was a friend on all occasions, and

he may almost say at his command, had not overheard a private conversation which contradicted pointedly what had been laid to his charge. This he reported to the general and the prefet, and prevailed upon them to destroy the letters which had actually been written and would an hour later have been sent off to Paris. The unprincipled C— was sent away the next morning, and the author allowed to pursue his little engagements at Mons. But he could never wholly regain the good opinion of the rulers, nor convince them of his innocence. His situation was a revolutionary one, in which an intimation was equal to a charge; and a man, from whatever cause, who is viewed with an eye of malevolence, may lose his liberty or his head at the suggestion of a rogue. It is enough that he be of

the suspected party, for him not to deserve or obtain a hearing, and not to be believed though he be heard.

About this time he had applied to the minister for permission to remove to Paris. He had seen that nothing could be done to any good purpose at Mons, either as a teacher or a manufacturer, while Paris would have furnished sufficient resources for either. The answer returned was, that the request could not be complied with at that moment. He then asked leave to settle at Amiens; and having obtained it, he made a journey to that city, in order to make the necessary arrangements for the removal of the family.

Here he found an army of twenty thousand men, and no house nor even apartments that were unoccupied. He

was therefore obliged to remain at Mons a little longer, and took as he supposed every precaution for his safety, by informing the magistrates, under whose care he was placed, of the circumstance. As they were satisfied, he had no reason to suppose he had done wrong, or had neglected to do all that was right: but the general soon convinced him of his mistake, by ordering him again under arrest, and forbidding him to go out of the town under pain of immediate and close imprisonment.

Previously to this he had changed his design of going to Amiens for that of returning to England, having discovered that an escape might be practicable, and had become necessary to the support of his family. He resolved to make use of the pretence of the one in order to bring the other to bear the

more conveniently. But he was shackled with the parole which he had given, and in consequence of which he had enjoyed a certain degree of liberty. The last arrest, and the prohibition to quit the town, came at a seasonable moment to release him from every engagement.

Having sent off his family in an open chaise under the care of a person who knew the country well, and who avoided the places in which danger might be feared, he finished as nearly as he could what remained of his affairs, and trusted the secret of his real designs to only one person. Quitting the town towards the close of day, he travelled without interruption till he arrived within two leagues of the Dutch republic.

He knew no fear but that of falling into the hands of the gendarmes, who probably would have demanded his passport, and if so, would certainly have conducted him back. Speaking

French perfectly well, he was not a suspected person, and could pass among that people as a native of France. He went in to sleep at a public house on the road side, where he could not suppose any evil would befall him, proposing to walk the remaining short distance at an early hour the next morning. While supping, he was alarmed with the intelligence that a gendarme lived at the next door, and usually came in to drink his pint where he then was, and that he was actually engaged with a comrade who was to sleep there that night, and might perhaps come in late.

He requested to have a chamber to himself, went early to bed, and started again as soon as it was light. Every thing promised kindly, and only one more house was to be passed, when, to his great surprise and vexation, he was stopped by an officer of the customs,

who asked who he was, and whether he was bearer of a passport. A more particular examination ensued, he was betrayed by his papers, and ordered to be secured.

The officers searched him with the strictest care, examined even his hat, and the stuffing of his handkerchief, took off his boots, and emptied his pockets. Unfortunately they found the little wreck of his property, and the produce of the sale of his effects, which being in louis, they declared to be forfeited, by virtue of a law, which prohibits the exportation of the coin of the réalm. He was conducted before a justice of peace, who ordered him to be conducted back to Mons, by the gendarmerie, and who refused to restore a single louis, to defray his expenses on the road, although it was well known that he had but little sil-

ver, and what was acknowledged not to be sufficient for necessary purposes.

He was guarded by two men, the one armed with a cutlass, the other with a loaded musket, to the place where he had slept the night before. There a disagreement arose between them and the gendarme; and, though much against their inclinations, they were under the necessity of remaining with him all night. They went therefore to a public house together, where they partook of an indifferent supper. In the course of conversation, he had gained the good opinion of his guards, who supposed that his family was still at Mons, and that he intended to petition the government for the restoration of his money; for he had pleaded before the justice, upon the authority of the grand juge, that being a prisoner of the state, they had no right

to take from him any thing about his person by any law of the realm whatever; and the justice had, in consequence of that, refused to confirm the act of its condemnation, referring the question to a higher authority.

One of his guards was extremely fatigued and sleepy, the other loved his pipe, and enjoyed it best in the open air. A moment favourable to decampment very unexpectedly presented itself, he made his escape out of a back door, ran across the garden, and aided by the obscurity of the night, was soon out of the reach of discovery.

Once quit of his company, he wished not to rejoin it, and ran, or walked, leaped, tumbled, and sweated for three hours without resting, till he began to fear that by the perpetual windings he had made in a country partly cultivated and partly barren, he might have gone back into France, instead

of having got into Holland. He was the more confirmed in this apprehension by not being able to discover some striking objects which he had noticed the day before. With his clothes soaked in the moisture of his body he stopped under a shed near a small house. He sat down there and lost himself for a few minutes in sleep. When he awoke every nerve was in motion, and he felt an extreme coldness succeed to the heat. He got up, and endeavoured by exertions to regain his warmth, and in about an hour knocked at the door of the cottage, and told the countryman he had lost his way. This man could speak nothing but the jargon of the country, which is a compound of Dutch, Flemish, and bad French; he got up, however, dressed himself, and conducted the author to a farmer, whose language was perfectly intelligible.

Upon inquiry where he was, great indeed was his surprise and disappointment to learn, that he was within two fields of the spot from which he had started, and within sight of the gendarme's house. He told the farmer, that if he would conduct him into Holland he would pay him for his trouble, and added, that he must not, on any consideration, meet with the officers of the customs. The farmer understood by this that he was a smuggler, and assured him he had nothing to fear. He got some breakfast with this good man, warmed himself well by his fire, put on a blue smock-frock, and away they posted across the heath, his heart palpitating, and his eyes turning from side to side at every step.

This heath country, which lies partly in France and partly in Holland, is much frequented by smugglers, who convey large quantities of English merchan-

dize into France upon their backs ; and in order to catch these men, the officers are stationed pretty thick, sometimes in one place, and sometimes in another. They conceal themselves in the holes, and often have dogs to give the alarm of any thing in motion. As the officers had seen the author the day before at their office, it would have been destruction to all his hopes to have met any one of them. But they arrived safe on the frontier in a couple of long and anxious hours. It was distinguishable by a rivulet over which they were to leap. The reader will believe that this was not too wide, nor that ever a leap furnished an adventurer more real satisfaction ; for the Frenchmen had said the day before, that they dared not touch any one on Dutch ground, without an express authority from the mayor of the commune. Here the author parted with

his guide, after having returned him his frock, and paid him the price of his service, and made away for Lomond, the first village in Holland.

CHAPTER IV.

Imminent Risk of being arrested again. Kindness of the Dutch People. Journey through Holland, and Arrival at Embden—Reflections on Emigration—Sources of the Information contained in the following pages.

THE author stopped longer at Lomond than he intended, because the person to whom he was recommended by his guide was not at home, and it was necessary he should procure information of the route he ought to pursue. He went on by his advice to another person. When he entered the house, the Dutchman looked at him with a curiosity that he did not like, because it seemed to betoken no good. After inquiring his way to Breda, the Dutchman said, "There was an Englishman stopped two days ago at Holvenne, from whom they took a good deal of money, and

he has got away again : I thought it might be you.”—“ Oh, no !” replied the author, “ I am a Frenchman.”—“ Well,” said the Dutchman, “ I mentioned it with a view to serve you, if you were the person, for the gendarmes are now in the village, and have asked leave of the mayor to search through it, and they have traced him over the sands by the print of his boots.

The author’s agitation may easily be conceived when he thought himself likely once more to fall into the hands of his enemies, and of the risk he had actually run, for he had passed a few minutes before in front of the house where they then were, and one of them was the man to whom he had been presented the evening before. He thought truth would serve him better than falsehood : he declared that he was the man, and begged for his friendly assistance.

The Dutchman used every assurance to restore tranquility to his mind, conveyed him away into a private place where he could not be discovered, and sent him victuals and drink. While in this retreat, the mayor came with a long pipe in his mouth to greet him, to congratulate him on his escape, and feelingly to lament the loss of his money. He told him the gendarmes were gone, and assured him, upon his word, that if they returned and found him, he would not allow them to make him their prisoner. He added, that the author had great merit in their eyes, because he had been too deep for the Frenchmen, and that he might command every assistance they could give. He spent the evening with these excellent people, and the next morning the father of his good "friend in need" set off with him for Bois le Duc. He refused to take any

money for the entertainment he had received at his house, and put him into the bark, which conveyed him the same day to Rotterdam.

Here he found his family, who had not doubted that some evil had befallen him, because he had delayed his coming. Packets were at this time sailing every week for London, and one was going off the next day. The greater part of the French troops had quitted the country, and the guards were every where Dutch. But the French commissioners at Rotterdam were very scrupulous about the passengers that went off in the packets; and it would have been to expose himself to great danger to attempt embarking from thence. The commissioners might indeed have been bought over, as they frequently were, making, by this mean, their post a lucrative one; but their countrymen at the custom.

house had previously secured the cash, and the packets were very extravagant in their charges.

Without losing any time, therefore, the family set off for Amsterdam, where the author found many respectable sympathising friends belonging to the church in which he had officiated fourteen years before. They not only felt for his misfortunes, and partook in his joy, but offered him pecuniary assistance, and procured him a Prussian passport. With this they went forward through Groningen to Delfzil, the only place where any interruption was apprehended. The Prussian passport being exhibited, every obstacle vanished; and after three hours' sailing they arrived safe at Embden, which the sagacity of Frederick the Great has rendered a safe retreat for the subjects of every government. Here the author enjoyed a tranquility of mind to which

he had been for almost three years a stranger. He felt himself nearly at home, and in effect was so, after a passage of four days, two of which were passed on the river Ems. They landed at Gravesend, himself, his wife, four children, and a servant, after a voyage undertaken perhaps with some degree of rashness, conducted with danger and in fear, and finished exactly with the contents of their purse.

From the slow methods of travelling across Holland, and unavoidable delays, a month was taken up in their passage from the gates of Mons to the alien office in Gravesend. To the friends he left behind in his native country, he owes a large tribute of thanks, who prevented his experiencing similar distresses to those which he saw many of his countrymen endure at Valenciennes and Verdun. For under such an uninterrupted instability

of affairs, and such frequent changes, it must be supposed that he not only could not provide, by his industry, what was necessary for his family, but that he must spend at a rapid rate.

Such is the history of his wrongs, sustained from a government in which there once seemed reason to place a confidence, but which has been actuated by a principle of which even the despotic sultan might be ashamed. Let his countrymen take warning by the foregoing lesson, and recollect, that although they must consent to some privations in order to support the government that protects them, these are less grievous than the risks to which emigration gives birth, and that they cannot calculate upon the consequences of unsettling a family that have the means of support by their industry.

The circumstances in which the author was by necessity placed, obliged

him to travel a good deal about the country. He usually went on foot or in the public diligences, and sought every occasion on the road of obtaining a knowledge of the real feelings and sentiments of the people. Hence originated the account of the manners and customs of the inhabitants, which is contained in the following pages. It will be found, in some places, to enter into the minutiae of family life. It is from these, and perhaps from these alone, that a just idea of the true situation and actual happiness of a people is to be gathered.

We learn little of the state of a nation from the higher circles of a metropolis, and none at all of it from the pomp and splendour of a court. The farmer's table, and the creditable tradesman's fireside, in a country town, present a more faithful picture of the resources and condition of the mass of

the people. It is these we shall have occasion to visit, and from them we shall hear the unreserved and unvarnished tale of their attachment to their government, or disapprobation of its measures; of their regard to their church, or indifference to its ceremonies; of their esteem for its priests, or their contempt of their office; of the advancement or decrease of their domestic happiness, and of the progress of those arts and sciences which are essential to the comfort of the middling and lower orders of society.

The English have had but little opportunity of knowing the actual state of France since the Revolution. They have been excluded the country, or shut up in prisons, or within the walls of fortified towns, where, associating chiefly among themselves, they have heard little more than bitter complaints and seen scarcely any thing but una-

vailing tears. The scenes of distress in which they have partaken, have been what the sympathizing mind may well imagine; but so numerous, and so various, that it is impossible to be very particular in recording them. From what has been related respecting the author, may be drawn a general view of the sufferings of others.

CHAPTER V.

Men of low Birth raised to Eminence—Buonaparte's Animosity to the English—Proofs he gave of it—Sufferings of the English in consequence—Of Dr. M.—Of Mr. S.—Account of the Dépôts—Number of the Prisoners—Government Allowance to them:

MOST of the public authorities in France have been raised to their high stations by the convulsions of the revolution. And as we find to be the case in the convulsions of the natural world, those objects are often found upon elevated spots, which were formed to move in a lower sphere. Raised above the atmosphere in which they were destined to breathe, their power of action is suppressed, and they become useless or dangerous. This

observation may not be untrue of the present order of rich men in France, but applies more immediately to the military authorities now existing there. They look for further advancement to the supreme head, who is regulated in the promotion of his officers by nothing but his own inclination. They are therefore induced to put his decrees into execution in whatever way they apprehend will be the most acceptable to the emperor. Some of them thought they could not be too prompt or too severe in the execution of that against the English, because, on many occasions, Buonaparte showed so marked an animosity to the English name. On his visits to some of the towns, at the breaking out of the war, he asked, with an evident anxiety, "how many Englishmen were in the place?" and when informed of their number replied, "there were so many

too many." He refused to enter one town till the English that were in it were sent away, and immediately displaced the mayor of another, who could not inform him how many of our countrymen it contained.

In the department of the Pas de Calais he laid a positive injunction on the prefet, not to suffer a single Englishman to remain there. The event of such rigour was, that occupations and institutions were upset, and men who for twenty and even forty years had maintained a respectable and useful character in the country, were arrested, taken to prison, obliged to sell their effects, without any preparation for a sale, and themselves conveyed from brigade to brigade, lodged in the public prisons, as they went along, and subjected to imposition, and sometimes to pillage.

Amongst others who suffered this

cruel treatment at Calais was a physician who had introduced the vaccine inoculation into France. He was then a prey to a lingering disease, under which he had long laboured; but neither the services he had rendered to the country, nor his own personal character, which stood the highest possible in the public esteem, nor the miserable state he was in, prevented his being also moved away. In this state of infirmity he was put into a coach, but could not go beyond the Basseville, where humanity, or perhaps necessity, stopped his march, and he remained under the inspection of a soldier. The indignation of a people who have been generally signalized by their civility to strangers, was roused at this treatment, and a representation being made to the grand juge (chief justice), to whom all cases are referred that require an explanation either of

the decrees of the emperor or laws of the state, he wrote the very pointed letter to the sub-prefet, of which we have already had occasion to take notice. Dr. M—— was accordingly set at liberty.

A relaxation in the persecution of the English was the effect of this decision; but it was of no avail to those who had already suffered the loss of their all, and had been placed in the depôt. For when once made prisoners, there were but few instances occurred of their being released. It is easy to execute an equivocal order, but not so easy for a proud mind to confess it has been wrong, or to undo what it has done to effect the misery of mankind. Nor does it appear that this decision was of any effectual lasting service. The persecution was renewed at different periods, and in different places, from no known motive, but the dis-

position of the commanding officer, or the express order of the minister, or perhaps the capricious will of the chief vaguely expressed and indifferently understood.

While some few were screened by the favor of a general or commander, others fell the sacrifice of private revenge. A striking instance of this occurred at St. Omers : Mr. S—— was educated in France ; he had resided there from the age of fourteen to that of thirty. He had purchased very largely of the national estates and in the funds, and the greater part of his property was in the country. He was then engaged in beautifying his noble mansion near that city. Amongst others, he had purchased a large estate belonging to a nobleman who had emigrated, but whose name had been erased from the list, and who had himself been allowed to return. He was the inti-

mate friend of the sub-prefet, and this gentleman interested himself greatly to persuade Mr. S. to restore the nobleman's estate at a small advance upon the price he had paid for it. This Mr. S. was not willing to do, and the sub-prefet, in revenge, ordered a gendarme to arrest him and conduct him to Valenciennes; nor was it till after many months that he obtained permission to return to the enjoyment of his property.

It was long before the arrestations were at an end. Eight months after the first order, some of those who had lived a considerable time at Dieppe, arrived at Verdun. To what has been already said of their treatment in the depôts we need only add, that those who attempted to escape, but did not succeed, were more closely confined in the small fortress of Bitche, or in some narrow insulated prison within the sight of their countrymen,

in order to strike a terror into the rest. At the beginning of the war, Fontainebleau and Valenciennes were chosen to receive the hostages. At the former were placed those who were arrested at Paris and on its western side, and at the latter those who were taken in the northern departments indiscriminately. The prisoners at Fontainebleau were afterwards removed to Verdun, with those who were the most respectable at Valenciennes ; and the poor sailors, and other unfortunate persons who could not maintain themselves, to the citadel in Valenciennes. It has been said, that since the breaking out of the war with Austria all of them have been removed back to Valenciennes, it being thought that Verdun was too much in the road of the king of Prussia, or the other powers of the north. The sailors in the citadel of Valenciennes had the liberty of going out into the

town every day to work, and a considerable number of them were always to be seen on the market place after their roll-call, in waiting for persons that would hire them. A few respectable families were allowed to remain the whole time at Valenciennes ; amongst the number was Lord Barrington, who has distinguished himself by his humanity ; for he has been lavish even to profusion in his charities to the poor, and has done incalculable good to the distressed. For a considerable time he distributed money daily to a number of pensioners ; and we believe it may be said, that no one in want ever applied to him in vain. In the summer of this year, 1805, there were about seven hundred at Verdun, nearly as many at Valenciennes, a thousand at Givet, and about that number at another place. The government allowance was a pound and

a half of ammunition bread per day, which is a compound of wheat and rye, the common bread of the country, sweet and nourishing, when well made: but as contractors too often flourish at the expense of the miserable wretches they are to feed in that country as well as in this, the intention of government is not always fulfilled, and they sometimes eat what is fit only for the cattle. They have also an allowance of three pounds of beef per week, which is sometimes fat and good, but it not unfrequently resembles the worst meat that is brought to Smithfield market, and which is sometimes purchased for similar purposes.

CHAPTER VI.

Ancient Walloons—Different Changes of the Government of their Country—Resources—Mines—Quarries—Houses—Churches and Convents—Produce of the Land—Climate—English Merchandize in high Estimation—Coals.

THE descendants of the ancient Walloons, the inhabitants of Hainault, now the department of Jemmappes and its vicinity, partake of the character and dispositions of the French and the Flemish people. Not so light and fickle as the one, though equally attached to dancing, and other amusements ; nor so cold and formal as the other, yet pursuing, in many of their manners and diversions, the same habits of life. They are the offspring of one of the detachments of the Saxon people, who quitting their country at an early period in search of adventures, estab-

lished themselves in many different parts of Europe. Their language has been in a great measure lost for some centuries. From their vicinity to France, and by becoming a province of that Monarchy, they fell into the use of the French language, which has since been universally spoken among them. Some of the country people still retain a mixture of their ancient dialect, and talk a language that is not intelligible to every Frenchman ; besides which, they have a twang in their manner of speaking, by which they are known to belong to the neighbourhood of Mons. At all periods of their history they have been a discontented and rebellious race. Unable of themselves to maintain an independency, yet seldom satisfied for any length of time with one master, they have been ready and solicitous to enlist under another chief. Situated in the

neighbourhood of so many powers, and possessing considerable resources within themselves, others have been tempted to invade them and make their country the theatre of war.

Here are coal-mines in abundance; and, as is usually the case, iron ore in their vicinity; stone quarries of different kinds, but all of them useful; and marble of an inferior quality. They have also an excellent lime-stone, besides chalk and good brick earth. With these advantages for building, it may be supposed that their towns are well built, and that their houses are strong and durable. They really are so; and the appearance of the towns in this department, and of the Netherlands in general, is truly pleasing to the eye. The houses are high, and covered chiefly with slate; the rooms are lofty, and the ceilings are finished with a peculiar degree of elegance.

The work is strong, and a large quantity of materials is put into the buildings; but after all, they have nothing in them of what we call comfort; nothing of that finish that serves for a sweetener to the substantial good things with which the Creator has furnished us, but which must itself come from human ingenuity and industry. It is a striking part of the French at large, that they cannot express in their language the idea of *comforts of life*. Perhaps as the thing is unknown to them, they do not require the name. There is elegance in the houses of the great, there is magnificence; but under the roofs of the other classes of men, there are not the neatness and satisfaction even of an English cottage. We have a thousand little accommodations in our dwellings, which are united only in our island, and which

give a high relish to the greater blessings of life.

The churches in Flanders are large and handsome, many of them of elegant workmanship. The quantity of iron, lead, timber, and hewn stones which they contained, presented a temptation that could not be resisted in the time of republican anarchy ; and, in consequence, a very considerable number even of the parish churches were pulled to pieces, or wholly thrown down for the sake of these materials. The convents and churches were a richer prey to the levellers in Flanders than in France, where they either have not had materials for building in such abundance, or the enthusiasm of the people has not led them to erect so many stupendous edifices to the name of their saints. One cannot now pass through this country without feel-

ing a painful impression at the sight of the ruins of ancient monuments so lately the pride of the people: for, however we may condemn the superstition that raised them, we must behold with a high satisfaction such magnificent works; and the pious mind may reflect with pleasure, that man has raised them to the honour of that God from whom he has received all.

The land of Jemmappes is in as high a state of cultivation as the nature of the country will allow. Their farmers, though not equal to the Flemish farmers in wealth and consequence, are not behind them in agricultural science and industry. Their ground is covered with fine crops of corn, and they grow a large quantity of flax and hemp and other seeds, for the extracting of oils.

The climate resembles that of Eng-

land. It has been said that the perpetual variations to which we are subject, are owing to our insular situation, and to our being exposed to the winds that come over the sea to us in every direction. It appears, however, that the continent in the same latitude is subject to similar varieties. A residence of two entire years, and the testimony of the inhabitants as to prior seasons, have fully convinced the writer that they experience the same fluctuation of weather as we do, and that sometimes the four seasons seem to visit them within the space of twenty-four hours. The winters are of the same severity as they are here, and the summers seem to have been of late equally unwilling to begin. This year (1805) particularly, which has been distinguished through the summer months by a singularly unpro-

missing appearance, has produced with them, as with us, the most abundant crops, and the finest samples of corn.

The people of the towns have a commercial spirit, and have always carried on a considerable trade with England, which is greatly to the advantage of this country, as no part of their industry, except a small quantity of lace, and a little linen cloth, are purchased of them for our use. They are passionately fond of English manufactures. Indeed no good articles can be bought in their shops, that did not originate in the British isles. Nor can we wonder at their partiality for English merchandize, since the woollen and cotton goods in general that are procured from other markets, are miserably wrought, and dear to the wearer even at any price. This country has been so frequently the theatre of war, and they have so few manu-

factories among them, that it might be presumed they have been always poor and miserable. But this is far from the case. Those very wars which have been the scourge of their land, have occasioned the spending of large sums of money amongst them, and the disposal of their superabundant produce upon the spot where it has been grown, or whence it has been dug from their mines.

The coal trade has of late years furnished them immense resources, as the greater part of the low countries of Holland, and some parts of France, are supplied by their merchants. And the coals become dearer as the wood is less abundant, and proportionably high in price. During the time of peace, the whole coast of France, and of Holland, had been supplied with coal by the Newcastle traders, and doubtless they would again, if peace were

re-established, because the Newcastle coals are much superior to theirs. But now the department of Jemmappes furnishes the greater part. They have the convenience of a canal which runs from Jemmappes through Condé and Valenciennes into Flanders, and it there branches out to the principal towns on the coast; and they have also a communication with the Rhine, by which they convey their coals into Holland. That republic is also served in part with this article from the late bishoprick of Liege, which lies upon the river Meuse.

CHAPTER VII.

Revolt of the People at the Instigation of the Priests—Conduct of Joseph II—Dismantling of the Towns, and Sale of Convents—Entire dismantling of the Towns by Napoleon—Battle of Jemmappes.

THE Flemings were for a longtime subjects of the court of Vienna ; but Spain, at that time a warlike nation, subjected them to her dominion, and retained them as her vassals during a long series of years. At length they yielded to the Austrian power, who found in them a valuable acquisition, on account of their contiguity to her territories. It does not appear that Austria ruled them with much severity. Their states continued always to assemble at Mons, the seat of the former government ; and no taxes could be

laid, nor armies levied, without the consent of the states.

The internal government of the country was in their own hands, and they were visited at intervals by their emperor, who was generally esteemed amongst them as a friend. In every state, however, turbulent minds spring up. It is, perhaps, the most unthankful office in the world to govern men; for as their minds are so variously composed and their interests so opposite, it is not possible for a sovereign to give universal satisfaction. A spirit of patriotism, as it was falsely called, fomented by the priests, discovered itself. A general agitation took place; the priests were seen at the head of the soldiers exciting them to rebellion, and nothing but a signal punishment could effectually suppress it. On this occasion Joseph II determined to diminish the power of the priests, and

by degrees effectually to get rid of those locusts of the land. Their possessions in this country were immense, their houses rich; their churches abounded in gold and in grandeur; they were not satisfied with all this, but would have taken from the throne the little it required for its support. He put it out of their power to raise a serious rebellion against him in future, by dismantling their fortifications, destroying the outworks of their garrisoned towns, filling up the ditches, and selling the land. At the same time one third of the convents were abolished, their property sold for the benefit of the state, and the monks and nuns allowed to go into the other religious houses. In the town of Mons, ten out of thirty were put down, and it seemed as if a measure of this kind had become necessary. For whether it was, that the people had become less partial to

the monkish habit, and recluse manner of life, or whether the monks and sisters were more unwilling to let others partake the good fruits of their forefathers' superstition, certain it is, that many of these societies had become very small in point of number, and that large ranges of building, with considerable incomes, were enjoyed by twenty, ten, and even by four or five persons. Not a doubt is entertained in the low countries that it was the intention of Joseph to have completed the work he had begun, and to have abolished the whole mass of convents and abbeys together in a short time, if the victorious republicans had not taken the work out of his hands, by sweeping away them and thousands more at once.

The dismantling of the towns was an essential service rendered to the people, however the states might be disho-

noured by the event. For being no longer able to oppose a victorious army, they opened their gates on its arrival, and by that means avoided the dreadful consequences of long and distressing sieges. When, therefore, the celebrated battle of Jemmappes was fought within sight of the walls of Mons, and the Austrian troops were forced to retreat towards the Rhine, the mayor stood ready with the keys of the town in his hand to present to the conqueror, who did not permit any pillage or attack upon private property. At that time their minds, like the public mind at large, were elate with the pleasing hope of liberty. They volunteered themselves the associates of the French republic, requested to be incorporated into it; and getting rid at once of their emperor, their priests, and the burdens upon their state, they became proud of that boasted equality of which they

had pleased themselves with the expectation.

A farther and a more complete dismantling of these towns, and many others which are now in the interior, has taken place within a few months, by the order of the emperor Napoleon. Having no longer any occasion for them, as garrison towns, the commandants, and stationary officers of engineers, are set aside, the barracks and other buildings that remained in the hands of the government have been sold, and every appearance of fortification taken away, except the old walls that surround the towns. These, with the best of the barracks, have been purchased by the towns themselves; the former to be preserved for an ornament, and the latter to be repaired for the reception of soldiers, who may be quartered there, that individuals may

not be liable to the embarrassment of receiving them into their houses.

Our readers will no doubt have imagined that the celebrated battle of Jemappes was fought upon a distinguished eminence ; and if they recollect the description given of that battle, will suppose that the French troops had to ascend a lofty mountain, on whose declivity were placed the Austrian redoubts strongly entrenched one above another, so as to have been almost impregnable. Such certainly was the idea conveyed by the French accounts of that engagement. The fact is, the Austrians were encamped on a gentle rise, up which the plough passes with the greatest ease, and where there is now scarcely any appearance of fortifications having ever been raised. The redoubts of the Austrians were breast-works thrown up at the moment and defended by their

cannon. And certainly those who will seek “reputation at the cannon’s mouth,” must do it at an immense risk. To do all justice to the French republican soldiers, it must be confessed that the attack was well conducted, and gained them an immortal reputation; but when their account of a battle is to be translated into English, or is read by our countrymen in their own language, a due consideration ought to be paid to the genius of the two languages, and the two people, which is so materially different; a regard also must be had to the meaning of the correspondent terms, which frequently differ. A mountain in French, is often a little hill in English, as a man in France would be charmed with a thing with which an Englishman would scarcely be satisfied; and an act of civility which would make an English lady blush, cannot be dispensed with in a

French society. It is in consequence of the custom of translating literally from their gazettes, that we gain sometimes an idea of what they say, or of what they do, vastly greater than even they themselves have ever entertained; and hence they have been often charged with gasconading and with flattery, neither of which, in fact, were intended. Though the French appear to us given to bombast, and devoted to compliment, yet it may be doubted whether they have really more of the one or the other than the inhabitants of our island, because custom has taught them, though it has not us, the meaning of the words they employ; and we well know that all governments view in an equally favourable light, and describe in the most pointed language, the advantages which they gain over their enemies, and are equally unsolicitous about adhering too closely to the truth.

CHAPTER VIII.

Account of the People—Sale of Church Property—Satisfaction of the People upon it—State of the Country under the Emperor—The Towns large and rich—The Country poor—Farmers' Labourers.

THE mass of every people is poor. They have little to lose, and are apt to aspire after the wealth of those they envy. The people of Flanders and of France were particularly poor. They had not the same incitements to industry, which exist in a free country ; and were almost wholly destitute of that large and respectable body of men, that are at once the honour and happiness of our nation, men of moderate fortunes. Although the number of their nobles was large, yet it was small, in comparison of the body of the people. These men, and the religious societies

united, held almost the whole of the landed property. The flight of the privileged orders from the country, and the dissolution of the houses apparently dedicated to penitence, but actually devoted to lust, presented them with a scramble, in which each hoped to come in for a share. There are few who will hesitate to acknowledge, that by the rule of right, the wealth of the monasteries was a fair game for the people. It had been extorted by religious fears ; by the most powerful of all, the fear of future punishments, from their trembling dying fathers, who had given for the salvation of their souls, what ought to have supplied the wants of their children ; and had paid to be delivered themselves from purgatory, that which should have saved their descendants from a prison. Therefore, when it was sold back to the people, and at a very moderate price, it re-

turned into the hands of those, who alone had a right to hold it; and became the source of life and happiness to thousands of industrious families, instead of feeding the pampered bodies of those, who were not only useless to society, but who had become its fear and its curse.

It may safely be asserted, that the people at large saw, with satisfaction, the dissolution of the religious houses; not only the unthinking and dissolute part of them, but also the serious and thoughtful, and even those who attached themselves the most strongly to the catholic religion. They had already been persuaded that priestcraft and mummary did not belong to christianity, and that idle devotion was not the duty of the followers of Jesus: they loved their church, and its ceremonies; and education had made them desire to see their great Matron and

Intercessor not in a stable with her infant in a manger, but in the noblest buildings their country could boast of, bedecked with the silks of Persia, the gold of Peru, and all the richest spoils of the east. They esteemed religion the more when accompanied by wealth, pomp, and ceremony; but they had entirely abandoned the belief, that the pretensions of monastic piety had any thing to do with it; they saw therefore, with a secret joy, the despoiling of the monasteries, but had not discernment enough to spy out, in its full extent, the meaning of liberty, fraternity, and equality. Experience has taught them, that the change from the useless and dangerous parts of the old system, to the heavy burdens and miseries of the new, has not proved favourable. Under the emperor they paid so few taxes, that the weight of them was hardly

felt. While commerce flourished, and they had the means of buying the produce of other countries, and selling some of their own, the creditors of the state received their payments regularly, and many of them lived in comfort upon the fruits of the labour of their younger years.

The roads were always kept in the best order ; the quartering of soldiers was well regulated, and easy ; and no personal service forced from them. The troops were handsomely paid by the emperor, and they spent their money freely in the towns where they were stationed. The monasteries, though the seats of indolence, were some of them the nurseries of charity : they gave, at stated periods, bread, soup, and money to the poor ; so that a family in distress could not want a homely, but nourishing repast ; and the indigent were always found in the

neighbourhood of the convents. The income of the nobility was usually spent in the large towns; and they had their appointed periods also of distributing their alms: and, moreover, there were many rich endowments for the support of orphans and foundlings, the sick and the old, which were conducted with care, and furnished a large relief to the miseries of human life.

On the continent there are but few small towns: most of them are large; the inhabitants who were not obliged to reside in the country, flying to them for protection, from the effects of wars and civil disturbances among them. Here they were secured by the fortifications and the garrison, and were but little afraid of an enemy without their walls; and as the number of these towns was limited, they were not at liberty to follow individual

fancy, in erecting new places of abode, where they might be in safety.

Such were the towns which contained a small part of the population of the land. In the country, a very different scene presented itself to what we witness in the corresponding parts of our kingdom. Where mines or quarries furnished an independent labour to the poor, they had sufficient means of support, although the price of their labour was not enough to raise them above the station in which they were born.

In the agricultural departments, the labourer was necessarily poor; and so was the farmer. One-third part of the land belonged to the religious establishments, houses, and churches; and the principal part of the other two-thirds, to the nobles and the sovereign; the latter of whom never sold his estates, the former very seldom: there-

fore a man, even of large wealth, could not easily become a landholder. The farmers could not be rich, because they were the tools of their masters, and often obliged to remove to a sterile spot, after having improved, by their skill and industry, the land upon which they lived. The wages of the labourer were low, and, without occasional supplies from the monasteries or mansions by which they were employed, would not have supplied the wants of nature.

The villages were ill built, and contained only the farmers, with their labourers, who surrounded the palace of their lord, as dependent upon it. It is not customary to see houses scattered up and down, as in England; and the eye is never relieved in wandering over the ground, by the sight of the gentlemen's beautiful seats, that give so great a richness to the English

landscape. The fruits of the feudal system are still seen in all their force. On a certain tract of land, only one was chief; and as he feared the incursions of the neighbouring petty tyrants, he built his retreat like a fortress, surrounded it with a ditch, and called it his castle. The manor houses are still known by the name of *chateaux*, though most of them have lost the appearance of attack and defence, by which they were formerly distinguished; and as the vassals depended upon their lord, and were protected by him, their habitations were placed in the neighbourhood of his, trees were planted in considerable quantities to protect them from the weather; and the country round, as far as his property extended, is one open plain, without house, hedge, or tree. The roads are cut through this

country in a direct course as by a mathematical line, and offer to the traveller the same uninteresting view for many miles together.

CHAPTER IX.

*Changes brought on by the French Revolution—
The Characters that figured in it—Sufferings
of the public Creditors—Miserable State of
the Army—Patriotism of the Soldiers—Re-
novation and Successes under Buonaparte—
—A Stop put to Revolutionary Measures.*

IF we examine the situation of the people now, we shall find it presents a very different appearance; and after so many, and such decisive changes, it would be a wonder if some parts of the picture were not improved. The boasted liberty which the French pretended to bring in their hands, like many other of the gaudy pageants of life, changed its complexion when brought nearer the sight. The convulsions of the departments extended to the conquered country; every man

feared and distrusted his neighbour; a few of the dregs of the people, who had looked with a greedy eye on the opulence of the rich, willingly received the fraternal embrace of the sans culottes, were raised to posts of honour, and in their drunken revels, planned out the division of the property of their towns.

Fired with a zeal for liberty, they condemned every thing to the service of the state; but, in their sober moments, when the execution of their decisions took place, the loaded sieve did not travel up to Paris, without being well shaken on the road, and its best contents spilt out in the departments. Many of their citizens are now clothed in purple and fine linen, who, at the period of the revolution, were despised for their insignificance, or hated for their crimes. The pillage of the houses often furnished the means

of the purchase of the lands ; and the receiver of the public money, who before would not have known where to look for his own, became the owner of a village, or the possessor of half a town ; and for many years, during the repeated changes of governors, little was known of the finances of the departments. The debts of the old governors were transferred by treaty to the new, who engaged faithfully to discharge them : but, alas ! their servants so ill supplied their urgent necessities, that it was long before any proposal was made to reimburse the public creditor, and then a small composition was offered, which many, though poor, would not consent to receive. The distress which arose among these men is not to be expressed ; where they had little or no means of support, they were actually starving in their houses. The impudence of the beggar was not

calculated for their use ; their former respectability forbade it, or could they have summoned it to their aid, objects were now wanting to whom they might apply. Hearts that are depraved and base, are rarely allied to bowels of compassion ; but such hearts had many of the new made rich. The monasteries could no longer open their doors, to deliver out their weekly bread ; the greater part of the revenues of the hospitals, and houses of charity, were taken by the commissioners of the nation for its use ; and the people were in that dreadful state of confusion, that they knew not where to look for the morrow's supply.

When therefore we hear the accounts of the military, respecting the state of the army during this dreadful time, it is past human calculation to make out what held it together, or how it was possible for the miserable soldiers to

remain faithful to their commanders. In many places, they were actually and truly *sans culottes*, and *sans* every thing else ; frequently obliged to march without shoes to their feet ; their clothes made of wretched materials, were soon worn off their backs ; with victuals barely enough to support nature, and which could give no bodily force. The pay of officers as well as men was in arrears, not for days and weeks only, but for months and quarters ; nevertheless, they remained steady in their ranks, and, with the eagerness of tygers, foraged, not in the barns of the living for the food of their body, but in the old churches and caverns of the dead, to collect saltpetre, that they might drive away the enemies of their country.

Such was the state of things when Buonaparte was placed at the head of the army. He addressed his soldiers

in some such words as these :—“ I am sent by Providence to your rescue ; I see you now destitute of every thing, but that which is of itself capable of furnishing you with all. Your clothes are worn out ; your skins are torn ; your bodies half famished ; your pay in arrears ; but your spirits are not broken. Behold before you the rich, the luxuriant plains of Lombardy ; I will show you the passage into them. Follow me, and you shall want for nothing ! You shall be well clothed and fed ; and in three months I guarantee to you all the pay that is due from your ungrateful country !” They followed him, and he kept his word.

From that time the face of things began to change ; and France re-assumed its consequence in the political world. Without entering deeply into the history of the French revolutions,

we may add, that once more it seemed likely to go back into anarchy and confusion, when the same great character unexpectedly returned from Egypt, seized the reins of government, and brought about that order of things which has since appeared in France. Public affairs then began to assume a tone; the constituted authorities were made accountable to a higher power, and under the inspection of an eye that could soon discover their irregularities. The property that had been sold, could not be taken again; to have interfered with it, would have been to call in question the right of governors to execute their own laws, and an act of injustice towards those who had risked their property upon the faith of the government. But a stop was immediately put to the hasty proceedings of revolutionary principles; and,

by degrees, a system of government was established, in which men can define the extent of their confidence, and use their industry as the means of their support.

CHAPTER X.

Landed Property passed into other Hands—Destruction of the Woods and other Trees—Pillage of the public Property—Farmers become Proprietors of Land, and enrich themselves—Registry of Estates and Duties on them—Towns impoverished—Appearance of the Country changed—Beggars—Charity given after Confession—Increased Price of Provisions.

THE landed property of the country had completely changed hands. It has already been observed, that one third of the *terra firma* of France belonged to the church. The whole of this had been confiscated; and what had not been brought to the hammer was kept in the hands of commissioners for the service of government. They seem to have been particularly careful to pre-

serve the immense forests with which France abounds ; few of these had been sold, but their timbers had been felled in a most unmerciful manner, without distinction of age, to be sent away to the ports and dock-yards. So strong was the frenzy for the fabrication of a flotilla, that should carry vengeance to the shores of England, that not the woods only were robbed of their pride, but even towns and villages were despoiled of their beautiful vistas and favourite walks, and the ramparts of their shades, at once an ornament and a convenience to the inhabitants. But how frail is man, and how little fixed to his principles ! When the vapour of enthusiasm was passed, self-interest succeeded in its place, and the greater part of these unreasonable sacrifices answered no other end than that of building private houses, or filling the stack-yards and fire-places of the com-

missioners. Many of the farmers had become in a short space of time purchasers of their own lands ; and the younger sons of families, who had but little to depend on, and especially those who had been bred to the law, procured landed property, and retired to reside upon it.

The old system of things had given support to an uncommon number of lawyers, advocates, and notaries ; these were the *hommes d'affaires* of the nobility and clergy, and found the means of enriching themselves in the perplexity of the law and the abundance of its statutes : but the new constitution, founded on the simplest principles, contained few laws, and gave them but little employment ; and the constituent assembly, fearing that too large a body of counsellors would sow confusion, rather than maintain peace, amongst the people, limited their num-

ber, and allowed only a few to exercise their functions in a town.

The man who by his labour can furnish to society the necessaries of life, will, in every troublesome and calamitous time, have an advantage of accumulating wealth which others do not enjoy. It is not therefore wonderful that the farmers increased their fortunes rapidly, and added every year to their estates. The more stability the government acquired the more valuable the estates became ; and what had cost them in the outset a handful of money, amounted, in a few years, to an immense revenue. These had been, in the perpetual fluctuation of public affairs, which occasioned a corresponding fluctuation of private property, divided and subdivided in a thousand forms, and it is now become a difficult matter to ascertain to whom some of them originally belonged. This change

of hands may be ascertained by a circumstance worth mentioning: the sale of every estate, whether it be of land or house, is registered in the Bureau of the department, and a duty of five per cent. paid upon every such transfer to the whole amount of the purchase. Many cases are known of the property of which we are speaking having already paid forty per cent. duty; and if the receipts of a government did not revert to the people who pay them, by the natural revolution of the wheel, the whole would thus, in a certain term of years, be lost in the great gulf.

We have already seen, that the wealth of the country was originally collected in the towns, while itself was always poor: the contrary of this is now become the fact; the towns are comparatively poor, while the country retains the fruits of its industry, and

begins to assume a more gay and animating appearance. Those towns which were not manufacturing, or those whose manufactures have declined in consequence of the war, of the former of which Mons may be given as an example, and Valenciennes of the latter, have had their resources greatly diminished, and in a measure dried up : they are filled with beggars and with misery, and may well sigh for the return of those days that they will never see again.

The impudence of the beggars is much greater than is common in other countries ; they not only din the ears of the passengers in the streets with, “charity for the love of God,” and promise them a prayer to the Virgin for their health at the price of a sous, but they make a common practice of ringing or knocking at the doors as they stand in succession, and repeat their calls till

the tenants go out and send them away. Many of these are young women, and girls and boys in the full vigour of their health. The doors and the neighbourhood of the churches are perpetually pestered by this rabble of ragged, dirty, lousy, and drunken objects, that cannot excite our pity, because they are really criminal ones; but they are accompanied also by the crippled, the blind, and the diseased. In the purlieus of God's house they present their addresses with the strongest pretensions; for charity is really thought, among that people, to cover a multitude of sins, and the absolution of the priest is then esteemed the most efficacious when it is followed by deeds of benevolence. After absolution they usually give to the poor; and when a body is carried into the church to receive the holy aspersion and the benediction of the priest, money is

given at the door, or at their own houses.

There are not only fewer houses of charity and periodical benefactions since the revolution, but the entire stagnation of commerce, which every town, even the most interior, feels to a certain degree, renders it difficult for the poor to get work; add to this, that provisions of every kind are risen to a very great price within the last three years; since the year 1802 they are nearly doubled. Many circumstances may have contributed to this.

The taxes have been more than tripled since the entrance of the French into the country; their wealth has been drawn away to the metropolis of France, and a considerable part of it lost for ever. The commerce which used to be considerable with Holland and England, has been annihilated by

the severe ordinances of Napoleon. The manufactured goods which they would buy from other countries are forbidden to enter theirs, and the produce of their land and of its bowels confined within the limits of their own territory. The circulating medium is small; no paper money of any description is found in the departments; the farmers are become independent, and are able to give, in some degree, the law to the markets; and a middle set of men have lately sprung up in the country, who, by making the produce of the land an article of trade, feed the markets, or hold back the grain, as circumstances may be favourable or otherwise. Besides which, their manufactures have never yet assumed any vigour; they are conducted on a small scale, with capitals often inadequate to their demand. The minute division of labour, which may be estimated the

very soul of manufactures, and which enables the English to outdo every other nation, is not yet generally adopted there. There is nothing but vegetables that can be deemed cheap in France; for, though other things are a little lower than in England, yet the resources of the industrious part of the nation are so scanty, and their pay so small, that they are in fact much dearer to the buyer than the same articles are, under similar circumstances, in England. To this should be added, that manufactured goods are either much worse or much dearer than here: so that, although the tradesman has a smaller amount of taxes to pay in France, there is little doubt that he has a better chance of improving his fortune in England, under all the burdens of government, than he would have in France, with the same prudence to direct his affairs.

The difficulty which the middling and lower classes of men experience of living is very great, and their complaints are loud and unceasing.

CHAPTER XI.

Taxes :—on Wines, Spirits, and Beer ;—on Property, Cards, Stamps, Mortgages ;—on Land, Windows, and Doors ;—on manufactured and printed Goods ;—on Posting—Liberty of Speech—Account of Buonaparte's Privy Council—His Irritability—Liberty of the Press—Newspapers—Sudden Disappearance of some Men in Paris..

HOWEVER Buonaparte may detest England as a rival, he has seen that the ingenuity of Mr. P. is well worthy of imitation, in the grand art of extracting money from the pockets of the people, and is actually following him, in some of those steps, which are the most grievous and oppressive to the subject. Wines, spirits, and beer, are subject to heavy duties. Property is taxed, though not in exactly the same way : licenses

for the sale of almost every thing must be taken out, and a special license for the sale of tobacco and gunpowder. Of late, in order to derive a large revenue from the diversions of the subjects, the apparatus for the printing of cards has been taken into the keeping of the public officers, that none may be sold without being first duly stamped. Two-pence half-penny was the price of a pack of cards six months ago, but now they are not to be bought for less than half a crown. This seizure of the apparatus for card-making was made by the receiver of the stamp duties, without any public law having passed, or notice having been given to the people.

The revenues arising from stamps are immense ; every thing of a public nature, even the processes at law, which are to appear in the court, and from which counsellors are to plead ; and all addresses to the public au-

thorities must be on stamps; as must also every page of the ledger of a man of business, if he mean to employ it as a document to prove his debts. Every mortgage is registered at the stamp-office, and a large duty paid upon it. This is a regulation which furnishes great advantages to the country at large; for a man cannot deceive another by taking a second mortgage on his estate while the first is unpaid, as it can always be known by applying to the office what mortgage lies at that time upon it. In every department is a stamp-office and registry of the sales and mortgages of estates, where ordinary stamps are distributed and extra ones may be procured; for an unstamped deed may be rendered legal by being stamped afterwards, and a triple duty paid.

They have taxes on land, on windows, and on doors, a tax on persons,

or annual poll tax, together with one on the furniture of their houses. Besides these, many manufactured and printed goods pay a duty; and the post-horse work and turnpikes bring in a large revenue. The post-houses are stationed at regular distances on every public road; no other than these are allowed to let post-horses, and, for the exclusive privilege, they pay a handsome acknowledgment to the government.

We have said, that the people's complaints are loud; nor let it be imagined, that they are afraid of finding fault with the government, or suspicious that their neighbours should denounce them as hostile to the state. There is not a greater liberty of speech in England, either in private company, or in public houses, than there is in France, relative to the proceedings of their rulers. Without speaking of

friendly parties, in which conversation must every where be free, political subjects are freely discussed in taverns and clubs; and no one seems afraid to declare his disapprobation of public measures. If any thing personal transpire in that country, as well as in this, a man would run the risk of being called to order, and in perhaps a similar way; for it amounts to about the same thing, whether a *habeas corpus* act has no existence, or whether it can be set aside on every pretended emergency.

There is an essential difference, in the opinion to be formed of the arrangements made and adopted by the two governments. Our constitution holds the king to be free from guilt, and charges all the imperfections of government upon his ministers, as upon the counsellors and agents of the king; there, the ministers are the in-

struments of their chief, and do only as he directs. The manner in which the important decisions of Buonaparte are formed, is as follows:—When he has some expedition to send out, some new tax to impose, or some general measure to adopt, he calls his council, which is known to be composed of the greatest characters in France. He has found out the means of attaching men of all parties to his interest: he does not ask whether they are protestants, or catholics; whether they were the partizans of the late king, or of avowed republican principles; whether they had sided with the Brissotines, with the party of Robespierre, or with the factions that afterwards ruled the republic. All party distinctions have been evidently set out of the question; and his only object has been, to unite men the most celebrated for their information, their depth of thought, or

their experience in the affairs of states and of empires.

If the past lives of the privy counsellors of Napoleon were examined, and contrasted, it would be found that they form the most motley crew that ever assembled to discuss a political question. But that is of no consequence; they are men of considerable sagacity, and he wants them only for advice. These he calls together, tells them he has such an object in view, requests to know their opinions of its success, and the best means of executing it; and desires them to give him their sentiments on a certain day. On that day he meets them again, hears what each of them has to say, suffers the question to be fully discussed before him, and retires to decide upon his measures. That done, his secretary is set to work; and no one knows his determination, till the affair has actu-

ally taken place. He is therefore the prime mover in all the affairs of the French empire; and to him alone accrues the credit of their success, or the dishonour of their failure.

The subordinate affairs of state must necessarily be regulated by inferior instruments; but all the main springs are directed by himself. It will not appear surprising, that a man who bears perpetually so much upon his mind should be irritable and passionate. If he were not quick, it would be impossible for him to get through his work; and great characters have always some blemish that serves to take off the brilliancy of their splendid talents. Buonaparte discovers extreme irritability, if opposed in any favourite scheme; or if his orders be not executed with great rapidity. He not unfrequently uses the *coup de pied* for his *argumentum ad hominem*, upon

those who attend about his person ; and even, it has been said, upon his confidential secretary ; so that they who are near him, are in a continual trepidation when any thing has ruffled his temper. At other times, as is usual with such characters, he is perfectly familiar and pleasant, and becomes their companion.

The liberty of the press in France is not equal to the liberty of speech ; its consequences are more fatally extensive, and may with greater ease be prevented. It has been long forbidden to circulate English newspapers in France ; and it may be presumed, that the extracts taken from them by the *Moniteur* and other papers are so mutilated as not to bear a similarity to the originals. No newspaper can be published in the country without the MS. being first examined by the *prefet* or some other person whom he appoints ; and no book-

seller dare expose to sale any books of a licentious nature, or dangerous political tendency, under the dread of a domiciliary visit, and consequent arrestation and imprisonment.

There have been some instances at Paris of the sudden disappearance of men, who have not been heard of after, and who, it is supposed, have been concealed by order of Buonaparte. This was the case a few months ago of a person of respectable family, and large commercial concerns, who, on his return home one evening to Paris, disappeared, and was never seen again. About the same time a gentleman, who was on a visit to the metropolis from one of the departments, had sent his linen to the washerwoman's, but having occasion for some of it, called upon her, and by chance saw the mark of a friend's shirt which was in the house. He asked whence she had

fetches it, and was thunder-struck at the answer, "from the prison of —." He endeavoured to get a sight of his friend, but was refused; and it was not till after many weeks that he succeeded in convincing the minister that his friend had been arrested through mistake in the place of another, and was perfectly innocent of the political faux-pas of which he was believed to have been guilty. This gentleman had been some months in prison, and might have died there but for the fortunate discovery of his friend.

CHAPTER XII.

Particular Account of the Conscription—Registry of Births and Deaths.

THERE is yet a source of grief of which the conquered countries complain most bitterly. It is the cruel and heart-rending law of the conscription; which requires the inhabitants to part with their sons when arrived at the age of manhood, to fight the battles of a power they hate, and to die for a man whose government they abominate. Under their old emperor, soldiers were raised by recruiting, and the widowed mother might solace herself in the advancing years of her son, who was to be the prop and father of her family; but now she looks with terror to the age of twenty-one, as to the arrival of a tempest that will sweep away all her

hopes. The execution of the conscript laws is very rigid, the demand for men having been so great that supplies cannot be met without difficulty, and at great expense, and government is not easily pleased in the replacement of a strong well made young man.

Every child that is born in France must be carried to the town house within twenty-four hours after its birth, to be registered, and in order that the officer may ascertain its sex by inspection. For a trifling fee he will take his register to the parent's house, if the child be ill, or he desired to do so. Every death must likewise be registered at the town-house; or, if it happen in a village, at the office of the mayor of that village. And as the state acknowledges no distinction in its subjects when born, so also it knows none after their death, but ap-

points a common burial place without the town, where all have an equal right to inter, and may use their different rites and ceremonies as they please.

Besides the registers of births and deaths, there is a correct statement of the population made out every year by the police officer, and no one can come into a city or township without its being known to the police, who wait upon him to inquire whence he comes, and whether he is the bearer of a regular passport. In this way the exact population of the country is ascertained, and the number in every town is known. No register is admitted but that which is taken from the public books; and, as a full right of citizenship exists, the state asks no question about the baptism or non-baptism of its children, nor whether they are catholics, protestants, or Jews, but ascertains and preserves with equal care the

accounts of their births and deaths. The convenience of this regulation, as it relates to succession, is evident, but that is not the principal object the government has in view in inscribing so carefully the ages of the subjects. The important point gained is, to be able to ascertain when their young men were born, and when their turn is come to render their country a personal service. It is not possible for any to escape ; for if they are absent from home, on whatever pretence, or in whatever country, at the time of their coming of age, they must appear to take their chance with the rest, or their parents will be subject to very heavy penalties.

The minister of war makes his annual report, to the minister of the interior, of the number of young men wanted for the ensuing year. The minister divides this number

according to the population of the departments; the *prefets* divide it again by the population of the district; and the districts divide it between the towns and *communes*, in the same proportion. All the young men of the age of twenty-one are required to be present at the drawing. If they have any natural defect, be it ever so small, they are not called upon; but, as every one must bear his proportion in the defence of his country, the parents of those who do not draw lots pay three times the amount of their taxes for that year, as a recompense for the personal services of their children. If they are poor, and pay no taxes, they are exempted altogether, on the ground of incapacity.

Among the young men are often some who have an inclination to be soldiers. They draw the first, and, if the lot does not fall on them, they

take other men's chances for a sum of money agreed upon, and may happen to draw three or four billets before they take hold of the fatal one. What renders it peculiarly difficult to replace a man, is, that none can be received as substitutes but those of the same year, and perfectly free from defect. The *prefet* and the *gendarmes* are present to regulate the drawing, and it is in their power to let any escape whom they are inclined to favour. At the drawing at Amiens, for the year twelve, four young men of respectable families, who were students at Paris in music and drawing, came down to take their chance with the rest. A respectable physician, at whose house the writer was on a visit, made out attestations of imbecility and disease, and, the *gendarmes* being previously gained over, they were rejected when they presented themselves to draw the lot; being told,

that men like them, with natural infirmities, were not fit persons to be received into the army.

Those who are fortunate enough to escape in the drawing, are not liable to be called upon any more, except the new conscripts desert before they arrive at the army, in which case others must supply their places. If there happen an extraordinary demand, more than can be supplied out of the conscription of the year, a demand is made in advance upon the succeeding year, that is, upon the youth of twenty, and some of them are taken before they would be liable to serve in the regular course of the law. The time of service is limited to six years; but a military power, in the time of war, does not scruple to detain them eight or ten years, or even more. The number of troops required, the dread of losing their lives in a foreign land, and the

extreme difficulty of finding substitutes, make the price of them very high. Of late years it has mounted up to a hundred pounds, but the more common price is about forty or fifty. Let it, however, be remembered, that these are large sums in comparison of the same in our country. In this way were our ancestors served by the Romans in the time of their greatness, and this will be the liberty their descendants will enjoy, if ever they become associated to the military state of France; our sons will be called away to fight its battles abroad, and our industry will supply the luxury of its capital.

Under these views of the actual situation of the ancient province of Hainault, and of the Low Countries, is it surprising, that the people should sigh for the return of their emperor,

or that they opened their ears with rapture when a continental alliance was first talked of? They regarded our premier as the best friend to the interests of their country, because in him they hoped to find the deliverer of Europe.

CHAPTER XIII.

General Impression in France respecting Buonaparte — His Visit to the Departments, particularly to that of Jemappes—His Inconsistency with respect to Manufactures—Accounts of Manufactures.

AFTER the many revolutions which the French have experienced, and the perpetual scenes of confusion and bloodshed in which they have been involved for many years in succession, with a complete overthrow of public order and public credit, they certainly regarded Buonaparte as the saviour of their country. They acknowledge in him great qualities, and an extensive acquaintance with the affairs of their country; and above all, that prudent and firm conduct which has imposed silence upon the factions that had di-

vided them before. And though the majority are less satisfied with him in the character of emperor, than they were when he bore the name of consul, they had rather the present state of affairs should continue as it is, than to be exposed to fresh changes and new revolutions. The close and scrupulous attention which he has personally paid to public affairs, has reconciled them, in a great degree, to him in the capacity of a sovereign. He has manifested this in the excursions that he has made at different times into the departments, not for the sake of gratifying an idle curiosity, or to display an useless pomp, but to see and to know his new subjects.

Notwithstanding the more important business of state, which has relation to foreign courts, appears to be managed by the emperor himself, yet is he so attentive to the concerns of the de-

partments as to enter into all their minutiae. Take, as an example, what occurred at Mons, on his visit in 1803. He received the different bodies of men in their turn, and conversed particularly with each of them; and it seemed, by his manner of addressing them, that he had no need of being informed of any thing they had to say. He told the bishop, who acknowledged that his clergy were not very well satisfied, that they had every reason to be so, for that so much per annum was paid out of the public purse to the bishoprick, which was so much to each curate.

He discovered, what was, perhaps, the grand object of his visits, in talking with the director-general of the coal-pits, and afterwards with the receiver. Coals pay a certain duty upon being drawn up out of the ground. Buona-parté inquired the number of pits at work, and the quantity of coals they

would produce per week. He calculated to himself in a moment the whole produce of the pits, and asked the director whether the proprietors would be willing to sell the mines to government for a sum of money, which he mentioned, and which exceeded what they were estimated at. The director replied, "No."—"I believe you," said he, "but I will give you the double of that;" to which he replied, that he believed the proprietors would not be willing to part with them. "No," said Buonaparte, "but government ought to derive from these pits a much larger revenue than it actually does;" and he intimated that they might expect a considerable increase of their taxes.

He told the prefet that the department must be taxed higher, and when that officer complained of their being poor, Buonaparte replied, "If you are

poor it is your own fault, for you have every thing but industry to make you rich;" and he added, that every department ought to be taxed according to its ability. He seemed to have a minute acquaintance with every subject that came before him: and rarely did an officer present himself, who had been with him in any of his campaigns, but he recognized him, and could tell in what corps he had served, and in what battle he had fought.

He has betrayed the greatest inconsistency with respect to the manufactures. When he became consul he issued out his edicts for the encouragement of national industry, wrote letters to the prefets, recommending the interests of manufactures to their attention, ordered a number of convents, in different parts of the country, to be given free of rent, or at a rent so low as amounted barely to an acknow-

ledgment of their continuing the property of the public, directed an annual collection and public exhibition to be made of the choicest articles they could produce, ordained prizes for the most expert mechanics and manufacturers, visited them often, and seemed to take a personal interest in what the workmen were doing. Time has, however, given us reason to believe, that all this mighty parade was no more than a blind to the eyes of the people, and a cover for his real designs. Celebrated men in the manufacturing line, who formerly were consulted and courted by the consul, are now scarcely spoken to by his ministers; and it is not long since Tallyrand replied to a celebrated English mechanic, who had obtained the prize for the spinning of cotton, "Don't let me hear any more about your manufactures; I wish there were none of them in the republic." Great exertions were

made by order of Buonaparte, for a time, to encourage them; but finding that the people had not a true manufacturing spirit, and did not get forward equal to his expectations, he became weary of the pursuit, or, perhaps, found his thoughts absorbed on subjects of greater consequence. In fact, having declared himself pretty plainly the chief of a military government, he naturally thinks the less of civil affairs.

The manufactories of France, in general, are in a very low state; and most of the English, who, encouraged by the flattering promises of the consul, had established them in the republic, have been grievously disappointed. There are very few articles in which they excel. Their glass, and especially the cut-glass, is wrought in a superior style; the porcelain of Paris is no where to be excelled; some japan work has been lately brought to a state of

high perfection; their fine woollen cloths have always been renowned, and their linens, of the best sorts particularly, are esteemed all over the world: but their iron and steel works are, in general, very defective, and their polish is bad.

The common woollen cloths and hosiery are ill executed, because they are ill spun, and, of cotton articles, though great exertions have been made to improve them, they have hardly any that are fit to use. The English cottons both for men and women's wear, are as much esteemed in that country as in this; and if good ones are to be bought there, they must have come from England; for although large quantities are manufactured in France, and many new fabricks have been established since the peace of Amiens, they have not produced any yet that can compare with ours. Many

causes contribute to this. The want of capital induces them to buy the inferior cottons ; they are not capable of making a good thread of them, and, therefore, if the workmen were good, they could not make a good article. But their spinning is also imperfect. Englishmen have introduced the spinning machines into France, but being as yet little accustomed to their use, the people do not derive a proper advantage from them. Besides this, there is not a manufacturing spirit among the people. Satisfied with small possessions, and requiring but little to live in independence, it never can enter a Frenchman's head that a man who has thousands will venture those thousands in search of more. And, if he has been persuaded to risk a few hundreds in a manufacturing adventure, he begins to think his money lost if he do not receive his interest

in a few months, or, perhaps, in as many weeks. Money is at an exorbitant interest; one per cent. per month is often paid, and little is lent under eight or ten per cent. per annum. The scarcity of the circulating medium is so great in the departments, and even in the great commercial towns, and the old resources have so much disappeared, that a sufficient encouragement cannot be given to the mechanic to finish his work. He must offer it at a low price if he expect it to be sold, and consequently must bestow less labour upon it, or work it up from inferior materials.

Improvements cannot be expected under such disadvantages as these, and the articles which they make must remain in the same low state of advancement. The articles manufactured in straw have risen to a high degree of perfection in

our country, and are deemed sufficiently elegant for the wear of the most fashionable and most genteel of our ladies ; and yet we are indebted to the French for the invention, the best of whose works would be despised by our warehousemen.

Whether the trade originated among the shepherds of Switzerland, or in the villages of the bishopric of Liege, seems to be a doubtful question ; in both these places it has been known from time immemorial. Many thousands are constantly employed at the work ; it is done in the same way as at Dunstable, and the price of labour is extremely low, and yet their best work is scarcely tolerable ; and the little that is good, which has cost more time and pains to prepare, will not fetch a price proportioned to its worth. The article is in esteem, but must be sold so low, that the poor

cottager is not paid for her extra careful labour; therefore the work must be done quick, and consequently ill. The same is true of most other articles of general consumption.

CHAPTER XIV.

*English manufactured Goods in great Esteem—
Smuggling—Custom-House Officers—Treaty
of Commerce.*

THE low countries, in general, have suffered great inconvenience from the interruption of their commerce with England. They have been always accustomed to English merchandise, particularly cottons of every description. Nothing valuable has been exhibited in their warehouses, nothing recommended by their tradesmen, but what has been the fruit of English ingenuity.—For some time past the laws have been so strict against English manufactures, that it has been dangerous to have them in the house. Domiciliary visits have been made at different times by the soldiery, and all articles, supposed to be English,

have been taken away and confiscated. Now, as the English goods have always been the most in repute, they have been imitated as nearly as possible by the French artists, and much of their work has been sold at the price of English ; the consequence of which has been, that large quantities of their own manufactures have been seized and condemned by the ignorant satellites of an ill-informed government, because they bore the resemblance of foreign ; but these measures have not been sufficient to prevent the smuggling of them into the interior.

A contraband trade has been kept up along the banks of the Rhine, and the frontiers of Holland, to a very considerable extent. Buonaparte is well aware that commerce and manufactures are as the life and soul of the British nation ; and he knows that his subjects are not patriotic enough to refuse paying their

money away for a good article that comes from an enemy's market ; but he has sworn perdition to the English trade. He satisfied himself for a while with issuing strong prohibitory laws, and posting a thick *cordon* of custom-house officers along his frontiers ; but, finding these insufficient, he directed, a few months ago, that the merchants who were known to hold commercial relations with England should be arrested, and their papers examined.—This gave rise to the discovery of others ; and many were made prisoners, particularly those who lived on the frontiers, and who were the chief instruments in the unlawful trade. One of these observed, not long since, “ we “ could bear the occasional loss of our “ property, but now it is come to the “ *prise de corps*, we must desist ;” which many accordingly did. Notwithstanding, however, all this, the smuggling

trade is carried on to a very great extent, and there is no actual want of any article of British workmanship. This is chiefly done by the villages that lie on the borders of Holland, the laws of which having been hitherto much less rigid, have allowed the channel to remain open for a supply of English merchandise. These villages are sometimes visited by a detachment of French troops, who, in violation of all law, and under no other pretence than that they know the inhabitants to be smugglers, have entered their houses, seized upon their property, and carried off to the amount of ten or twelve waggon loads at a time. Though the risk in this trade is great, the gain is esteemed to be sure; for so high are these goods in the estimation of the people, that they will bear an advance of forty per cent. before they are disposed of by the mer-

chant for retail sale. Perhaps they are now still higher.

An army of custom-house officers are kept on the frontiers of the empire to prevent the entry of contraband goods. Custom-houses are built at small distances from one another, several being under the direction of one chief, and their officers are perpetually out on the watch. They are all taken from the interior of France, and are picked men, tall, strong, and alert. Their manner of life is hard: they seldom sleep in a bed; most of them indeed have none. They are out by night as well as by day on the wild heath or other places where the smugglers are expected to pass, with dogs, who are generally more watchful than themselves. When a poor fellow is taken with his load, he is condemned to three months' imprisonment; the second time to three years at the galleys;

and the third to the gallies for life. The half of the seizure becomes the property of the officer, and only one sixth goes into the public purse, the rest being appropriated for the general expenses of the customs.

It is principally cotton goods, tobacco, and the produce of the West India Isles, that are smuggled into France. Sheets of tin are also much in request, and at an enormous price; for there is not on the French territory a single person who can fabricate them: many attempts have been made, but all have miscarried. In truth, although the bringing down the higher orders has raised the merchant and the manufacturer to the pinnacle of consequence, yet, since that period, there has not been sufficient stability and confidence in the public affairs, to give birth to that degree of credit which

is necessary to the success of an industrious nation.

This confidence seems to be gradually returning: a proof of it is seen in the national domains, which have risen in value nearly to a par with the patrimonial estates. It will not, however, be possible for the greatest exertions of patriotism, either in individuals or in the state, to bring the manufactories of France into competition with the English for a considerable time. The people at large are sensible of this, and ardently desire a treaty of commerce, by which an interchange of articles might be allowed. Such an intercourse would certainly conduce to the best interests of both nations; though, in point of advantage, it would turn the balance greatly in favour of this country, because the articles they want from us are so much more numerous and ex-

pensive than those we should have occasion to buy from them. It has been said that the emperor is sensible of this, and will not, on any consideration, agree to a treaty of commerce with England. A dismal prospect for the lover of peace, who knows the obstinacy of his disposition, and the force of his arms; for the army of France was perhaps never in so formidable a state as it is at present, nor ever under the direction of so skilful or so stubborn a head.

CHAPTER XV.

Legion of Honour—Subordination of the Army—Account of the Leapers—Buonaparte's Tactics—Garrison Towns—Barracks—Quartering in private Houses—Punishments—Galley Prisoners—Guillotine.

THE establishment of the Legion of Honour, by which the Emperor has created a new species of nobility, has been the means of spreading his partizans and supporters over the whole face of the republic. This institution seemed originally to have been intended as a recompense for the soldiers who had signalized themselves in the revolutionary wars. At a very early period, it was solemnly promised by the National Assembly, that those who survived the establishment of the liberty and tranquility of their country,

should have a part of the landed property which had been taken from the emigrants against whom they were to fight; and Buonaparte renewed this promise when he came into power. He gave, therefore, the stars at first to the officers and soldiers: to the former, whose services had been signal, the gold star; and to those of less note, the silver one: but as he judged that others had deserved well of their country, who had not served in its armies, he included a number in the legion who were not soldiers; and afterwards thought fit to add all the prefets, bishops, and presidents of the tribunals, many mayors of towns, and others who had distinguished themselves as his friends. The legion is divided into companies, and every company has a portion of landed property made over to it, with a steward and secretary, whose business is to inspect their lands,

and pay them their annual dues. The private receives two hundred and fifty livres per annum, the superiors a much more handsome annuity; and, at their death, other persons are appointed by the emperor to succeed in their room. The star, or cross, as it is sometimes called, resembles exactly the cross of St. Louis, the badge of a distinguished order under the French monarchy, and is somewhat broader than a shilling, with a small medallion of Napoleon in the centre, and eight rays issuing around it: it is tied with a red riband, and fastened to the middle button-hole of the coat.

The subordination of the French army, and the good behaviour of its men, are the subjects of commendation in France. The police is so well regulated, by the means of the gendarmerie, that it is almost impossible for a criminal of any class to escape detec-

tion. Deserters from their army, and especially the young conscripts who are forced against their will into the service of government, are seldom long before they are brought back to the corps to which they had been joined. In order to prevent desertion, they are kept as much as possible at a distance from the department for which they serve. The conscripts of the low countries are sent to the southern departments, and the young men of Piedmont are placed on the northern boundary of the empire.

When a large army is collected on one spot, soldiers from all directions are to be found among them. The military are well cloathed, and provided with arms; their horse soldiers, and particularly the Cuirassiers, who have a breast-plate of brass, and a back piece of the same, make a truly respectable and martial appearance. It cannot

be doubted that the troops who accompany the emperor in his tours are a handsome body of men, and that their officers, in particular, are dressed with a distinguished elegance. It is not the custom with them to wear powder; they are mostly cropped; and their whiskers, which are always allowed to grow as long and as large, as they will, give them a formidable look. The ladies of the Continent do not seem to object to the manly appearance of the whiskers, which were borrowed from the Germans, though perhaps our English women might fancy something dirty and savage in the hair curling round the upper lip, and coming almost into the mouth.

The French have some battalions of troops unlike any that we know: they are called Leapers, and are trained to the greatest agility and skill in corporeal movements: they accompany a

corresponding number of cavalry into the field, whose horses are accustomed to carry double, and not to start when a man leaps up behind the rider. Their evolutions are made with wonderful rapidity; they gallop away to the place where they are required to act, and immediately the Leapers jump down, form themselves into a line of battle behind the horses, and become a separate army. When their orders are executed, or they meet with a repulse, they jump up again, each behind his companion, and are carried off in safety to another place. It may well be conceived of what wonderful service these battalions must be to a General like Buonaparte, who is present to command in his battles, and who retains, in the midst of carnage and confusion, the most perfect presence of mind, and has a perception of every favourable occurrence in the day

of battle. A contempt of the old military tactics, and a facility of improving these occurrences, have hitherto given him an advantage over the distinguished Generals of his day, who have been governed by a system in which all the accidents of war cannot be calculated.

Every garrison town is provided with barracks, which are built large and strong, where the soldiers, who are in garrison, are always lodged. If their numbers be greater than they will hold, and they are not encamped, every housekeeper is required to furnish to his quota of men, a bed, a fire to cook their victuals, and the utensils necessary for that purpose. The army of reserve, destined for the invasion of England, was long stationed at Amiens, and many housekeepers had two, four, and sometimes six men quartered upon them for the space of twelve months. The battalions were exchanged every

three months for others that were on the coast, and those on the coast were kept upon the water, in turns, a month at a time, in order to accustom them to the sea. They often made short excursions from port to port for the same purpose, and in these excursions they sometimes allowed the English cutters, or gun-boats, to come near enough to them to make them their captives.

The discipline of the troops has been always so good, that few, if any, complaints have been made by the inhabitants of Amiens of the soldiers having misbehaved in their families. It has been said of them that they are quiet, and give no unnecessary trouble. All soldiers, on their march, are lodged in the same way, as they pass from town to town, on the inhabitants at large, and not on the publicans alone; but there are every where receiving houses, where they may be lodged for the

trifling sum of sixpence per night per man. Therefore, few private families of respectability trouble themselves with these visitors. The usual punishment of a soldier, for misbehaviour, is confinement in a dungeon : if his crime has been heinous, he is flogged or sent to the gallies.

The criminal laws of France are not so severe by much as those of England. Exposure on a scaffold on a public day, and in the prison dress, is the punishment of small offences and petty robberies ; and over the head of the culprit, who is fastened by a rope to a pole, are affixed his name, and the cause of his punishment. For greater offences they are burnt with a hot iron on the right shoulder, or are condemned to the gallies for a term of years or for life : and if guilty of murder, or other very atrocious crime, they fall under the guillotine. Those condemned to the

gallies are employed in different parts of the Republic, in the public works, such as digging canals, clearing ports, or the like. Some hundreds have been at work for two years back at Antwerp, in repairing the port, and clearing the river of mud and rubbish. They work at the spade or barrow with iron balls fastened by a chain to their legs, and are guarded by a body of troops. The immense canal, which is to join the Northern to the Southern departments, a favourite project of Napoleon, and which will bear his name, will be dug out by these miserable wretches.

Some of our readers may not be informed of the expeditious mode of execution by the guillotine; we shall therefore attempt a description of it. It is fixed upon a scaffold, the axe suspended between two pillars, down which it descends through a couple of grooves: it is held up by a spring and a latch,

from which another string falls down at the side of one of the posts. The wretch who has forfeited his life to his country's laws, ascends the scaffold by three or four steps, at the top of which an upright board presents itself; against this his body is placed : the board is let down flat on the fatal machine, two straps are attached to it to fasten him down if necessary, and the board is slipt forward on a wheel, so as to bring his neck exactly under the axe ; there it is received in a board hollowed out ; and another board, with a corresponding hollow, is let down and fastened upon it, like the pillories of England : this is no sooner done, than the executioner pulls the string that holds up the axe, and, in the twinkling of an eye, the head is severed from the body. The whole operation hardly takes up two minutes. The head falls into a hole, concealed by a leathern apron, and the

body is thrown down a trap-door under the scaffold. The apparatus takes to pieces. The usual place of execution is the public market; and the weight of the axe, which is made with a slanting edge, like our ivory cucumber slices, is said to be forty pounds. In every department is a civil and a criminal tribunal, with a full power of life and death, which are opened to hear trials, more or less frequently, according to the business they have in hand. From these tribunals there is an appeal to the Chief Justice at Paris.

CHAPTER XVI.

State of Religion in the Low Countries—The Protestants—Particular Account of those in the Department of Jemmappes—Regulation of the Catholic Church—Tythes—Hierarchy of France—Appearance of the Clergy—Revival of ancient Splendour—Altars in the Streets.

WE now come to the interesting question of the state of religion among the French.

Though the catholics of France have been ever known to us by their spirit of intolerance, yet perhaps they have not really been more guilty of that unnatural feeling, than other nations who have been dupes to their priests. The human heart does not naturally foster arbitrary principles. While harmony is preserved amongst the powers of the soul, and they act in their appointed or-

der, love and benevolence will fill the mind, and the genuine affections of humanity will operate without restraint. It is a mistaken notion of the great Governor of nature, in the displays of his special favour, as taught by priests for the purpose of their own aggrandizement, that has given birth to the violence of party zeal, and the barbarous measures of bigots. The more ignorant the people have been, the more violent has been this false zeal, and the more murderous these destructive measures. These have existed among pagans and Jews, Mahometans and Christians, and do not seem to be the offspring of any one system of religion, more than of the rest; for what religious community can say they are exempt from them?

The people of Flanders, and the ancient province of Hainault, have been celebrated for ages back by their scru-

pulous attachment to the catholic church, and have not allowed protestants to appear publicly within their borders, unless they were countenanced by an imperial decree. Whilst they were under the Spanish yoke protestantism was not tolerated, and little was known of the disposition of the people towards it. Afterwards, when the court of Vienna became master of the country, it began its reign by a display of tolerant principles, and an entire liberty of conscience. Some protestant societies upon this sprang up, and enjoyed the exercise of their religion during a number of years, but in process of time the decree concerning liberty of conscience was repealed, and the protestants ceased to assemble for worship. It was supposed that the revocation of this decree was owing to the misrepresentations of the catholic clergy; or, as some have said,

to the suggestions of a favourite minister. At the recovery of their liberty by the French revolution, they renewed their public exercises of devotion, and obtained the order of Buona-parte after the concordat, for their ministers to be salaried by the state.

There are no protestants in the department of Jemmappes, except what reside in the neighbourhood of the coal-pits. Here they are pretty numerous. Some observations respecting them may be interesting, and from these, inferences may be drawn respecting the protestants in general. It appears that at the revocation of the edict of Nantes, many of the French protestants, driven by the necessity of their circumstances, took refuge there, where money was to be gained by working in the pits. There are three or four villages in which they live, and during the whole time of their not being al-

allowed public worship, they met at one another's houses, for the exercises of private devotion. About a twelve-month ago, they petitioned the emperor to be incorporated into a church, to have a place given for their worship, and a minister paid by the state.

At the time of this application some of them were in the habit of meeting in a private house on the Sundays to perform a religious service. This was not quite consistent with the laws of the realm, which give liberty of conscience and worship to all, but allow of no private meetings of which the magistrates are not informed, and the purposes of which are not known. The prefet was made acquainted with their meeting, and that on a certain day the sacrament was to be administered to them by a clergyman, who was settled at Valenciennes, and who had long made them a visit at the be-

ginning of every second month. This magistrate was a man of an ill-favoured mind, and of a dull and surly disposition; but as he had voted in the national convention for the death of the king, and other violent republican measures, it might be supposed that he was not favourably inclined to religious tolerance. He had been disappointed in his career of glory, by rising no higher than a *prefet*, and his mind had become black and gloomy by family distresses and losses. From these the transition to a blind devotion and superstition is not difficult, and he had become the instrument of some crafty priests, who had found an asylum in his prefecture from want, and who employed their influence over him to prevent the establishment of a protestant church. Everything in the department may be said to be dependant on the *prefet's* will. His

representations are listened to in preference to the representations of private individuals ; there is little chance of succeeding when he opposes ; or of substantiating a charge of partiality or injustice against him, when he has been guilty of a breach of duty, or an act of oppression.

Instigated by these priests, the prefect ordered two gendarmes to present themselves at the time of their meeting, and take them all into custody. They seized the minister and twelve other persons, and conducted them to the prison of Mons. The next day the minister had a conference with the prefect, which was repeated twice after. What passed in these conferences has been kept a profound secret ; but after two days the minister was allowed to return home, and, to his shame be it spoken, left his twelve unhappy hearers, without protector or friend, in the

prison. They remained there a fortnight: one of them died during that time, and within a week after the enlargement of the eleven, all but one died in a very extraordinary manner, and not without suspicion of having had a slow poison administered to them by the direction of the catholic priests. After this, the minister declined giving any assistance in the establishment of the church, and the business was conducted by a notary who had frequently addressed the people, and led their devotions in prayer.

Petitions to the emperor are usually sent through the hands of the prefet, who supports them if he thinks proper with his recommendation; but it was much feared that the prefet of the department of Jemmappes would be treacherous to these petitioning protestants. They sent an address enclosed

in a letter to him, and at the same time another directed to a celebrated protestant in Paris, who was to present it to the emperor. The prefet did not deceive them in their expectations ; he suppressed that which was enclosed to him, and was not a little mortified to receive the imperial decree, a fortnight after, for the establishment of a church and the payment of a minister ; a copy of which was also sent to the people. This mortification was increased when he was required to be present shortly after, with other public authorities, at the opening of the church, where the same gentleman performed whom he had sent to prison. Thus the affair rested in the month of August last : they could not then procure a preacher, because none being permitted to hold that office in the protestant church of France, but those who are educated

at Geneva, the number of ministers has not been equal to the demand, and two or three societies are obliged to unite under one pastor.

When a minister has been found and accepted by the congregation, another address will be presented to the emperor, stating his name, education, and qualifications; and then an order will be sent to the treasury, for the salary to be paid to him. This salary is 1200 livres, or fifty pounds per annum. In all the principal towns where protestants are numerous, societies have been formed. The number necessary, in order to ground a demand on the state, is five thousand souls, which are not required to reside in the same place: if contiguous villages or towns unite, they may have a preacher among them, and a building is given from the churches or chapels that were suppressed at the revolution. A number of these societies united compose a

synod; and all the synods are under the supreme direction of the general consistory at Paris. In the south, they are by far more numerous than the catholics, but in the northern departments they are only found scattered up and down.

The regulation of the catholic church is precisely the same. One curate is allowed for five thousand souls, and the same sum is paid him as a salary. The curates are under the direction of their bishop, and all are governed by a principal assembly at the *capital. But as the service of the catholic church is much more complicated than that of the protestant, and more servants of the altar are required, the faithful are

* No step whatever can be taken by the bishop, or even by the general council, without the approbation of Buonaparte, not even a curate appointed; so that although the pope is called the supreme head of the church, the emperor is supreme master.

obliged to furnish the assistants themselves, and these men have but too often an indifferent provision.

There is at present a greater want of catholic than of protestant clergy. So many have emigrated, and so few have been educated for the office during the last fifteen years, that in the country the duty of two or three churches is often performed by one priest. During many years their stipends depended on the precarious liberality of the people, and at a period too when the devout had lost their means of being liberal, and the new-made rich felt no dispositions to cherish the priesthood: and since the concordat the salaries have not been regularly paid by the state; but have been generally in arrears, and often not paid at all. It has been said with confidence, that the emperor finds the burden of the priests so heavy, and his demands of a military nature so

much more important, that he has it in serious contemplation to re-establish the tythes, and so get rid of it altogether. This seems the more probable, as the weight would then lie on the landholders, who, for the most part, having purchased their estates low, and enriched themselves very rapidly, may be able to bear an additional tax like this; at least the people are ready to say so, whatever they may think themselves. The church of Rome and its priests would no doubt rejoice in such an event, as it will procure them a surer mean of obtaining their incomes; and perhaps the protestant clergy, being subject to like wants, may not object to receive their stipends from so effectual and certain a source. But there is more reason perhaps to expect that the dependance of the church upon the state will be wholly dissolved, and that it will have no means

of support, but what it can derive from its own virtue, and the genuine influence it produces on the minds of men. This does not seem an event by any means improbable, though we cannot state the period when it may be expected to take place, but perhaps an opportunity for executing so important a design may appear as the issue of the grand contest in which the emperor of the French is now engaged. So interesting an event as the entire downfall of the hierarchy in France never more to rise, is under the direction of a Being infinitely wise. He has often raised up men to execute his purposes, who have seemed to be actuated by motives far different from that of the glory of God. It is true that the hierarchy has not now very far to fall.

The influence of the priesthood over the people is so greatly diminished, that

it can no longer be considered in the same formidable point of light. There are but few of the faithful who now conceive infallibility attached to their doctrines, or any high degree of veneration to be due to their persons. Indeed from a sight of them, one would suppose they were the very refuse and sweepings of the colleges and convents, so mean and shabby do they appear. When the country curates came into the towns, or were seen at their village cures, the mind involuntarily darted across the channel, and represented to itself our dancing, fox-hunting, and sporting, parsons, and asked whether the occupations of these men were the same. But in truth their situations have not a greater resemblance than their appearance. Taken from the lowest orders, and brought up in colleges or convents where they were much confined, and had no opportu-

nity of knowing the world, and the opinions of the better sort of people being decidedly against both them and their employment, they have had no association, since the revolution, but with the common people, and have not the means of acquiring an appearance more genteel, or manners more refined.

This was not the case with the former clergy of France. They were chiefly younger sons of good families, who entered the church with the expectation of its riches and honours; whereas the present servants of the altar have but poor prospects of worldly gain, and a very small quantum in actual possession. Many of them go through a whole service for twenty-pence, and often are not paid at all. And as they have but little of satins and brocades, of gold and diamonds, to dress out their altars and their saints, the eyes of the multitude are no

longer dazzled and blind to their real characters. Every exertion, indeed, is made by the priests to recover the splendour of their religious services. A few silver saints have been cast, and some new laced petticoats have been put upon the virgin, the altars have been decorated afresh, all the relics and images of the saints have been collected from the wreck of the revolution, and the old processions instituted anew, in those towns where no protestants assemble to worship.

Agreeably to the old order of things, not only every town is recommended to the special care of a saint, but every street has its patron, and every hole its divinity. Uncommonly attached to idleness and dancing, they eagerly embrace every pretence that their religion offers to gaiety. They fail not to commemorate the day sacred to the saint who presides over their street, or their

alley, dress up an altar to his name, and invite their friends to partake of their merriment ; for we are not to suppose that religion has any thing more to do with these ceremonies, than as it lends a name by which they may be called. Sometimes indeed they will chaunt a service in a contiguous chamber: this, however, occupies but a small portion of the day. Men are stationed with bags, to collect money of passengers in the name of St. Peter or St. Paul, and it is spent in the pot-house of his purlieus, or upon a neighbouring green. Little children are always mimics of great ones. Here they imitate the religious ceremonies, and with the same view. They spread a clean cloth (if they can get one) upon a chair or table in the street, set up a *Bon Dieu*, deck it out with pictures, shells, or broken china, and beg a liard for the service of the altar. They are, like

their teachers, importunate and troublesome in their demands upon all who pass by*.

* How numerous and costly soever their saints and temples may be, there is a divinity, whose rites are not the least essential to the comfort of life, who is held in less reverence by them, than by us. Like our northern brethren, at a late period of their history, they erect but few edifices to the honour of Cloacina. In the villages, and in public places otherwise decent, her rites are performed without regard either to their sanctity or their decency. Even at Verdun, a large part of their houses are destitute of this so essential an appendage; and the sacrifices of the coy goddess, are consigned to oblivion in the Meuse, or remain the dishonour of their ramparts, and of every bye corner of the town. English travellers with reason complain of this great want of delicacy in the French and Flemish people; for it is not possible to pass through their streets without perceiving its disagreeable effects.

In the places where protestant churches are opened, altars in the streets are not permitted, nor, indeed, public processions and ceremonies of any kind, lest any member of the society should be scandalized by them. There the catholic priest carries the host in his pocket to the dying man, and the burial of the dead is performed without pomp. The religious exercises of each party are confined within the walls of their respective churches. The catholics have themselves expressed their approbation of this decision, not wishing to see all the mummary and nonsense renewed with which their streets were formerly disgraced. In some cases they have even assisted in the establishment of the protestant worship, in order to restrain the power of their own priests. "They are well," say they, "in the churches, and when it suits us we will visit them there; but

we do not wish them to stop the industry of the people by their unexpected and unseasonable interruptions." For, when the procession passes in which the host is carried, it is announced by the tinkling of a little bell, and all are expected to come out of their doors, or to open their windows and kneel down, on a chair, or the ground, while it is going by, repeating a prayer that is appointed for the occasion. If it be met by persons in the street, they bend down on the pavement before it, a religious rite which is peculiarly ill-timed, when a visit of ceremony is in question.

CHAPTER XVII.

Faith of the Catholics—The Pope's Visit to Paris — Processions — St. George and the Dragon — Advantage arising from Confession—Bishops—Bishop of Tournay.

IT is not possible to estimate the quantity of the faith of the catholics of France. Appearances seem rather to persuade us that the services of the better sort of the people, if performed at all, are purely formal, and that no great concussion is necessary to induce them to change it for a more rational system. It is certain that no kind of veneration now attaches to the sovereign pontiff. Were we, indeed, to form our opinion from the splendid description of his late visit to Paris, as given in the gazettes, and the high degree of awe with which the people

are represented as having looked up to him, we might suppose ourselves carried back into the dark ages of christianity. But it is assuredly known, that the great crowds who followed him, were stimulated rather by curiosity than by devotion, and when in the act of receiving his apostolic benediction, they doubted whether it was the effusion of ignorance or of superstition, and often expressed their contempt of it by loud bursts of laughter.

In many of their public processions there is a mixture that savours much of paganism, or at least marks the ignorance of earlier times, that joined many things to religion, which evidently had nothing of religion in them. The priests of the present day, who are not such fools as to be ignorant of this, have endeavoured to exclude all this extraneous matter; but the people, who are as fond of foolery as they

are of religion, and who would not give much for the processions, if there was not something comical and amusing, as well as devout and fatiguing in them, would not consent to have a part without having the whole of their old processions. An instance of this may serve to exemplify the observation. In the first ages of christianity, or previously to its establishment, (for the exact period is not known,) a wild beast, of an hideous form, is said to have inhabited a ditch in the neighbourhood of Mons, and flying out upon all that passed, both man and beast, tore them in pieces and devoured them. A gentleman of Mons, known by the name of George, of truly patriotic feelings, ventured his life in obtaining a sight of the beast. He made up a figure as much resembling it as he could, and trained a number of dogs to attack and destroy it.

When he thought them sufficiently instructed, he led them out of the town, and set them upon the wild beast, which he killed, and brought in triumph to his house. There is now in the public library the head of a monster, said to have been the head of this dragon, (so it is called,) which St. George destroyed; since we can not wonder that this George became a saint, and we are more willing to assign him a nook in the temple of fame, than we are to see St. Adam and St. Eve there, with many others of small renown, that are found in their calendar.

There are persons who believe most seriously the fable of the head; but, unfortunately for their orthodoxy, it is beyond all dispute the head of a crocodile, and we have no authority for believing that crocodiles have ever existed in that part of the continent. We leave it for antiquaries to deter-

mine, whether this has any relation to the history of the celebrated patron of our country ; not knowing what story our sign-posts refer to, nor where the scene of his great atchievements lay. Be that as it may, the scene of St. George and the dragon has been represented from time immemorial, in the public procession on the feast day of the city. A hideous figure, of a green colour, represents the dragon, and, as one wonder is often accompanied or followed by another, the dogs are represented as perfectly unlike any that are now in being. The public are expected to pay for the sight of a Guy Fox in England, and at Mons the dragon and the dogs lay the inhabitants under a pretty heavy contribution. The priests were desirous of reviving their annual procession, but did not care to unite all this burlesque with the saints and relics of their churches, which were car-

ried together with the bones of the holy matron, the patroness of their city, on her golden car, in a solemn and grand procession through the streets of the town. But the magistrates and people unanimously refused to have the devotion without the fun, and the clergy at last consented that they should first laugh at the comical, and then bow to the solemn part of the train.

As there are few practices among men of which some good may not be said, it may be observed in this place, that the practice of confession amongst this people often affords an opportunity for the discovery of irregularities and thefts from the young and inexperienced in the arts of confession. The priests assume a power, which certainly the law does not give them, of shutting up their people in a dungeon, which is under the church or the house

of the curate, when they choose to punish them for any offence. This is done chiefly to the young; and the practice has been renewed since the concordat. Things stolen are often retrieved by the threat of ecclesiastical censure, and of the Divine displeasure.

The bishops, who are now the only superior clergy of the church of France, have endeavoured, by an affected show of penitence and humility, to impress the people with the same respect to their persons which was possessed by their predecessors in the apostolic office; but seemingly without any effect. The cathedral church at Tournay formerly possessed a silver shrine, containing the body of its founder, which had performed many miracles, and to which, of course, a high veneration was attached. When the property of the church was sold, this was

purchased by a gentleman who kept it in his house, thinking he should one day sell the silver with the bones in it, much more advantageously than he could the silver alone as bullion. It turned out according to his expectation; an offer was made him for the precious relic, and he accepted the price. A solemn day was appointed for the installation of the valuable piece of antiquity; the bishop went bare footed, carrying a heavy cross from the cathedral to the gentleman's house, which was at a good distance, and returned in the same manner, accompanied by all his priests, and as many images and relics as he could procure. But it does not appear that this humility produced any other effect than that of exciting ridicule and laughter.

The same bishop, having been frequently invited to the houses of the wealthy families of the place, sent

them notes of invitation to cards and supper, and took care to have it intimated that the game would run high. When his friends were assembled, with their pockets well lined for the game, he mounted on a table, and began to descant on the poverty of the church, on its inability to recover its splendour and respectability, without the generous assistance of such as they, and solicited strongly, that the money which was destined for play might be given for the service of the church. One of them immediately got up, and cried out, "The bishop is preaching! the bishop is preaching! Thomas put my horses to!" He was followed by the others, and the poor bishop was left at his table alone, deprived of the last hope of seeing his importance revive.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Atheism or Deism of France—Blind Belief of the World at large—Tendency of all Parties to the Belief in a God—Buonaparte's Prudence in re-establishing the Ancient Worship—Family Altars—Worship of Images—Bible—Prayers in Latin—Convents—Charitable Institutions.

IT has been generally believed in this country, that the French nation is a nation of atheists. If by the term nation be meant the rulers and chiefs, it may have long been, and perhaps still is the case ; if the soldiery of it, there can be little doubt ; if the gentlemen and tradesmen, of any education and rank, it may even be admitted to be generally true ; for such appears to be the actual fact at present. We should be rather inclined, however, to say, they are deists, than atheists :

for certainly the prevalence of atheism is not extensive, and the terms are usually confounded when men are talking of unbelievers: but it can hardly be supposed that the mass of a people will desert, without a very decisive cause, the God they have been taught to adore, or the religious rites to which they have been blindly attached from their infancy.

There is, perhaps, no large body of men which does not hold, without a fair examination, the religion they profess. The number is not great in any country, of persons who have an opportunity and a capacity of examining fairly the grounds of their faith; and it is still smaller of those who take the pains of thinking about them; therefore they turn out to be Pagans, Mahometans, Christians, or Jews, according as they happen to be born on the banks of the Ganges, within sight

of the temple of Mecca, under the conclave of Rome, or in the less dignified *precincts* of Duke's Place. How few are the instances, comparatively speaking, of those who desert their religious standard, to enlist under the banners of another chief! We speak not of the petty divisions of contending christian sects, whose question is confined to a narrow compass, compared with the grand divisions in the creeds of men. Mahometans rarely become Jews, or Jews Christians; nor do idolaters often join the standard of the cross. There is but one marked decisive step that men take in their investigations of religious truths: it is from all these parties indifferently to join that of deism. The existence of a God, whose agency is every moment presented to view, cannot escape from their minds; and though every idea united to this may be abandoned, they see him, and

adore him in all his works. Hence it has happened in every age of the world, and in all societies of men, that the enlightened and the wise have united, notwithstanding the influence and artifices of the priesthood, in the simple belief of a God, unpolluted by human devices. This was the case with the ancient Greeks and Romans, and has been, and still is so, amongst Indians, Turks, and Christians; and it has been the case also, in an eminent degree, in France since the revolution.

England alone, of all the countries of the earth, or to it, perhaps, may be added some other protestant countries, has had the happiness of seeing wisdom and learning united in support of its religion, and the most intelligent of its inhabitants engaged in the belief and in the defence of its faith. In most other countries, and in France especially, the places of worship are fre-

quented chiefly by women and children, and men of the lower classes. These seldom ask the reason of the faith that is in them; or, when they do so, are satisfied with the declaration of the priest, to whom they look for light, or are contented with believing as they do, because their fathers have believed so before them.

When the consul of France had prepared the way for the re-appearance of religion, not being himself attached to any particular creed, like a subtle legislator, he presented to the people the image they had been taught to conceive the most lovely, and conciliated their affection by healing the deepest wounds of their heart. He knew that the easiest way of arriving at the dignity of an emperor, was gratifying their powerful prejudices, and silencing their religious fears. All the ancient legislators have acted upon the same

principle, and their design has been to consolidate their own power. The main object of all religious establishments has been but one, namely, to controul the violent passions of men, and lead them to virtue, by a principle that can act on all; but as human laws cannot reach beyond the exterior, they have required some auxiliary more penetrating than themselves, something that can find its way to the heart. Reason is not generally the sovereign guide of men; sensible impressions are the more common instigators to action. The conduct of men is usually prompted by sensible impressions, and little can be judged of the ground-work of their faith from the actions themselves. There has been, indeed, some variety in the moral character of the systems of their lawgivers; but this variety has often arisen from a difference of climate, or the peculiar

turn of mind by which the society has been distinguished.

The avowed atheism or deism of France, has been chiefly confined to men of letters and education, and the young men who, from the jeers of society, have been led to suspect, and then to abandon, the belief of christianity. There are, however, many among them who attend the mass, because they see and acknowledge a decency and propriety in exercises of devotion, and because they think that any religion is better than none at all.

It ought to be confessed that, whencesoever the sources of their faith have arisen, the majority of the lower orders, and many of the middling ones, are sincere believers in the doctrines of the catholic church, and upright in the discharge of the duties it requires. In their attention to the externals of religion, in which they conceive great

merit to consist, they are much to be commended, and might often be imitated. In England, we hear of the family altar among those christian sects who are most attached to ceremonials. In France the thing exists in reality: the Virgin Mother, with the infant Saviour in her arms, offers to the view the grand object of their faith; and on every day of particular note, candles are lighted before her, that the institutions of religion may not, through a habit of negligence, be forgotten in their families. What the eye perceives, the heart will, in some measure, feel. We know not how the effect is produced, but in this we behold the God of nature converting, by a power unknown to us, the material object into a mental impression.

It certainly is not true, as often maintained by our divines, that the poor ignorant catholics pay an adora-

tion to their images, and worship their saints. The warm opposers of popery, at the time of the reformation, even the enlightened and the learned, hold out this idea strongly in their writings; but we believe the catholics of the present day regard their images only as the representatives of their saints, and their saints as the friends and companions of their God, through whom they apprehend that their prayers will be more likely to meet with acceptance, than if presented by themselves to their Maker. They also consider the saints in the same light that the ancients regarded the sylphs and genii, appointed to be their guardians and protectors, to convey the favours of the Most High to them, and their petitions to the throne of his grace.

The main body of the catholics have never seen the bible. It is the principle of their teachers, that they cannot un-

derstand its contents, and that the only portion necessary for their information is the historical part. They have, therefore, a history of the bible, which they put into the hands of all their young people. In this are contained the lives and characters of its heroes and its saints, with the comments of the fathers upon them. These are all spiritualized; and eminent divines have discovered no small degree of ingenuity in tracing parallels, and drawing inferences which suit the system which they support. The people are instructed in the doctrines of their religion from the canons of the church and the decrees of its councils. Since then the doctrines and the examples are derived to them from other sources, they can have no need of the original work, and no bibles are seen among them. The protestants do not appear to have any particular want of bibles, or, if they

have, it is their own fault, as they are to be had, by means of the booksellers, from the presses of Switzerland and of Holland.

The prayers of the church of Rome are said by the priests in Latin. There can be no doubt that the origin of this practice is in the universality of the language in the prior ages of the church, and the desire that they have had of preserving the strict unity of its worship: but it is not the less true that the people, who have never learnt Latin, are not ignorant of the meaning of the prayers, but know as well what the priest is saying as if it were delivered in their native tongue. It is customary for them to have a prayer book, with Latin on one side and French or Flemish on the other; and they repeat in their own language, while the priest repeats in Latin. It does not seem to be of the first importance

with them to have the exact sentence in their mouths which the priest is uttering at the altar. This is not possible, for the churches are often so large, and many of the people at so great a distance from the priest, that they cannot hear him when his back is turned towards them, and therefore go through the prayers each for himself; and are instructed by the tingling of a bell, by the change of the priest's position, and by other signals, of the part at which he has arrived, and the posture they are to assume.

Once on the Sunday, and sometimes twice, a sermon is delivered in the language of the country; but it is not deemed so much a duty to attend the instructions of the pulpit as to join in the service at the altar. Had the chief of the great nation declared decidedly in favour of the protestant religion, and exerted all his influence to establish it,

there is little doubt that he might have succeeded, by degrees, in persuading the people to become protestants, because protestant preachers alone would have been paid by the state; and a great number who, through decency, go to mass, would, from the same motive, (a motive, perhaps that is more prevalent in the world than we are aware of) have gone to the protestant church.—The public authorities would have been protestant, and the people would eventually have followed in their train. True religion would have been furnished with an opportunity of displaying its native excellence, and those who allow themselves to think, would have been persuaded to adopt it. But it is not reasonable to suppose that, without some such powerful attraction, they should quit the catholic church for another. Except in the South of France, they know nothing of what the reformed re-

ligion is, and have always been taught to entertain the most contemptible or most absurd notions concerning it: and even in the South, where societies have been long formed, and are numerous and respectable, it does not appear that converts have been made from the church of Rome. The number of protestants remain nearly the same, without any apparent accession or diminution.

The strides which the priests have made for the recovery of their power, have induced some persons to believe that the convents will be soon permitted to re-open. At present none of these are allowed. Many of the priests and nuns, whose qualifications to educate youth have appeared satisfactory to the prefets, have had convents given to them free of rent, on the promise of teaching a number of poor children gratis. In some of these the women

have ventured to receive noviciates, who have declared their intention of taking the veil. The age at which the first part of these ceremonies is performed is fourteen : they remain in the convent till arrived at their twentieth year, before the oaths of celibacy and dedication to God are pronounced, and the veil solemnly put on. If they repent of their project before that age, they are not admitted ; if otherwise, they are received into the sacred orders. As far as conscience is concerned, monks and nuns may still be made, and, if they please, they may be faithful to their vows ; but if afterwards the temptations of life should induce them to violate their religious engagements, they are free so to do, and are amenable to no tribunal.

The government does not seem to concern itself about the women, many of whom have taken the order within

the last few months ; but they are more watchful over the men, whose influence, in their religious character, is more to be feared, and will not allow them at present to take any step of the kind. A society of these, who conduct a manufactory in the neighbourhood of Mons, being suspected of an intention to recruit their numbers, lately received from the magistrates an absolute injunction to obey the laws in this respect, at the peril of being put under arrest. At the dissolution of the convents, pensions were appointed by the convention to the monks and nuns, but these have been generally ill paid, or not paid at all. They were allowed from two hundred to five hundred livres ; but the deed that authorizes them to demand it of the receiver-general of the department, has been no better than waste paper in their pockets.

It may not be amiss to mention, as connected with the affairs of religion, the charitable institutions that now exist in the country. These have been organized anew since the reign of Buonaparte, and are now on a most respectable footing. The hospitals are large, and well supported; one for the civil and another for the military department in every principal town. In some places these are united in an old abbey, or other large range of buildings. The orders of nuns also still exist, whose occupation was the benevolent office of nursing the sick. The Beguines and others have been allowed to remain in their houses, being found so necessary for the relief of the poor and afflicted; but their landed property has been taken away; and as the sisters die, the societies will doubtless become extinct. There are also some institutions revived for the maintenance of the old and in-

firm, as well as for the diseased in mind. In every department is an orphan school for poor children, who are so unfortunate as to lose their parents. In that of Mons, there are never less than five hundred, and often many more, where they are brought up in industry, taught to read and write, and placed out as apprentices to the working trade which they prefer.

There are also foundling hospitals, for the reception of the unhappy babes who are the fruits of illicit love; and who, in places where these charities do not exist, are too often made the sacrifice of their mothers' fears, or inability to nourish and maintain them. Some have doubted, whether these institutions are not the instigators to vice, rather than the cause of removing it; and whether young women have not abandoned themselves the more to

licentiousness, because they know that the fruits of their guilty commerce will be provided for at the public charge. But as the taking life away must be a crime of an infinitely blacker dye, than the giving it under any circumstances whatever; and as we may presume that the parents of these children think but little of the effect, while they become the cause; and as we know, that the forlorn and abandoned lover may usually be induced to preserve the fruit of her womb, when she can place it in a charity, where every provision is made for it, we cannot scruple to admit the expediency and the humanity of the institution. At Mons there are nearly a thousand children in the foundling hospital; and the number of these hospitals being considerable, they must give a large accession of physical

strength to the republic. When a child comes in this way into the world, whose mother cannot, or will not maintain it, it is wrapped up, and laid in a basket at the door of a director, or other reputable tradesman, and he sends it, with an account of its having been found, to the hospital.

There is also in each town a public workhouse, which is open to all who cannot maintain themselves by their labour, and where they always find employment. All kinds of works are carried on there, and a good dinner of soup and bread provided. The poor who live in the town, may go there for their work and their loaf, and return in the evening to their houses with the money they have gained. Whole families are admitted, if they desire it. All who can work, are employed; and the little ones are put into

a room together, where they are attended by the aged, who are past labour. So that, in fact, there is no necessity that any one should beg, or starve, at present in France.

CHAPTER XIX.

State of Education—Schools, primary and secondary—Lyceums—Buonaparte's School at Fontainebleau—The Pritanée—Objects of Study—Old Colleges—University of Louvain.

IT is an important question relative to every people, what is the state of education amongst them? Before the revolution, the lower orders in France received no education at all; for none was wanting in the kind of training that their priests thought it necessary to give them, and the nobles were not more desirous than they of enlightening the minds of their vassals. The low countries, however, abounded in colleges and universities, which have been celebrated for the learned men whom they have produced. The students were of the noble families, or

young men designed for the learned professions: their numbers, therefore, could not have been very large. The middling classes of life were greatly confined in their ideas, and sought after no information but what would assist them in getting money. During the anarchy of republicanism, it was a crime for a man to be wise; and many lost their heads for the same reason that others did their warehouses, because they were too well stored. Every thing that looked like learning was devoted to destruction; and what constitutes the pride and happiness of society, knowledge, and wealth, were alike marks every where set up to be shot at: and, as a fool once set fire to the grandest repository of human science, and celebrated his name by depriving the world of its splendour; so the fools of France will be ever famed in the page of history, for having

extinguished every spark of science, and destroyed every line of literature that fell in their way. The people then became immersed in ignorance, though boasting of their “age of reason,” and abandoned to its low-born licentiousness which is its natural companion.

One of the first things that the legislature did, after emerging from this short night of darkness, was to organize the public schools and colleges; to endow them; to appoint the most distinguished masters that could be found, to direct them; and to animate the youth by occasional visits and rewards of their industry, and their genius. In this, Buonaparte has acted a most conspicuous part, both by his decrees and his personal attentions. The plans of the public schools, and the names they have borne, have been changed several times; and no person is allow-

ed to exercise the art of teaching, either in these, or in private seminaries, in any part of the republic, without he be first authorized by the magistrates, who require written testimonials of his talents and moral character, signed by respectable merchants, or men well known. The lowest of these schools are called the primary schools, and teach reading, writing, and arithmetic; above them are the secondary, in which are taught the classics and mathematics, &c. or what the French and Scotch call, the humanities. These schools are not paid by the government, but generally have a place furnished them for their classes to meet in; and receive such other encouragement as is likely to stimulate their youth in the pursuit of their studies, and render them worthy a place in the lyceums, into which they are not admitted till they have distinguished

themselves in the lower houses of education. These have public examinations once a year, to which the magistrates and principal inhabitants of the towns which contain them, are invited ; and which are, in general, usefully and well conducted.

The lyceums are regulated on a superior scale. One of these is opened in every military division : an extensive range of buildings is appropriated to their use ; and the professors, who receive their salaries from the emperor, are men of the very first rate abilities. At the head of all these, is generally reckoned Fontainebleau. This is the favourite school of Buonaparte ; which he visits frequently in person, and where he collects the young men who are the most eminent for their abilities, and the most distinguished by the advancements they have made in the other departments of the empire.

Here is his grand military school, where his young soldiers and generals are formed, previously to their appearing in his more public school, the wars.

If the objects of education be law or divinity, there are universities at which the young men finish their studies. There is also a celebrated school at Paris, called the Pritanée, where the sciences are studied under every possible advantage. The large collection of antiques from different parts, in painting; sculpture, &c. are rendered essentially useful to the young students. The education received in the schools and colleges of old France is esteemed much superior to that of the conquered country; for, in the latter, it still remains in the hands of the priests. Their method of teaching the Latin, for we hear nothing of the Greek in their schools, is much easier,

and less fatiguing to the youth, than that of the English seminaries: more is done by dictation and exercise, than by committing to the memory. They attend to the mythology of the ancients, geography, history, and rational arithmetic (*arithmetique raisonnée*), which includes the lower mathematics; but their philosophy, and study of the *belles lettres*, are cramped, by the fear of speaking too plain. It will perhaps be hardly credited, that an esteemed professor in the college of Mons, when asked not long ago by one of his scholars, a question relative to the antipodes, replied, "we never talk of that, it is an heretical notion." Though they do not dare to confine science within the narrow limits that their ancestors had marked out, yet they cannot give it all the latitude it enjoys in the colleges of our island. The mysteries and fables of their religion

still form a favourite part of their exercises ; and going to mass, saying their catechism, and reading their church history, occupy a large portion of their valuable hours of study. This is not the case at the lyceum at Brussels, the national college : no studies relative to religion are allowed there, except on the Sunday, and then only within the walls of their chapel. In the lyceums, chairs are established for teaching the modern languages, and particularly the eastern ; from which we may conclude, that the heart's desire of Buonaparte respecting Egypt, is not given up, but will be renewed at the earliest period, when an opportunity presents itself. During the peace, the project was made and decided upon by him, to appoint an English professor in each lyceum ; but now, the very sound of the word sets his whole soul into such a ferment, that it certainly will not be executed

till the war is over. All the old colleges in Flanders, which were suppressed in the revolution, and have lost their endowments, have remained in this state till the present day. Latterly, an attempt has been made to revive the celebrated college of Louvain, and they have now some professors of great character and reputation. The old buildings have long been occupied as barracks for invalid soldiers, and it is presumable that they will not be turned out. The students are lodged in the town, and their numbers have been greatly augmented during the last twelve months.

CHAPTER XX.

*Amusements of the Low Countries—Archery—
The Game of the Ball—Dancing—Village
Festivals—Observance of Sunday—Intoxica-
tion—Religious Feasts.*

THE principal amusements of the Low Countries are peculiar to themselves; archery is one of them, and the arrows are directed perpendicular into the air. When the arrow was the principal weapon of annoyance to an enemy, in order to encourage the use of it, and to improve the men in the art of using the bow, prizes were instituted by the municipality of every town and village, to be given on the day of its feast, and the bowmen were invited from the neighbouring places to shoot at wooden birds, that were fixed

upon a pole from forty to sixty feet in height, raised up in the market-place. The smallest of the prizes was given for the first bird that fell, and the most valuable to the man that brought down the last. They were various, as the municipality chose to select them: a silver coffee-pot or drinking-mug, half a dozen silver spoons, a set of china, a dozen of pewter plates, or some other useful article of house-keeping, that will remain with them and their posterity as a proof of their skill. This amusement still continues, and the prizes are still given, though the art is become of little value; and since the invention of gunpowder they have added prizes for the best marksman with a musket.

Prizes are also given to those who discover the most muscular strength and agility at the game of the ball. It is

a small white one, which is struck with the open hand into the adversaries' ground, whose business it is not to let it rest there, but drive it back again. Parties are formed at this play of village against village, and town against town, and the most expert party gains the prize. Both the arrow-shooting and the game of the ball are under the inspection of the officers of the police, who attend as umpires of the games. The same exercises are observed at the village festivals or wakes, and the crowds that attend them are very considerable: besides these are the little gaming tables of *rouge* and *noir*, where the usual stake is a halfpenny, or perhaps a liard. The servants and cottagers join in a dance under a spreading tree, if there happen to be one in the centre of the village, while the farmers with their friends from the

towns, keep the best musicians employed in the orchard of the public house, where the juice of the grape is freely handed about. From an early hour after dinner their amusements continue till evening on the green, and then they retire into the houses, where the mirth is kept up till morning.

With dancing and with merriment a Frenchman is not easily tired. These diversions begin on the Sunday, which is always the day of the greatest note, because it is the day of the greatest leisure, and because their religion does not forbid such a use of the day, and it continues generally through the Monday and Tuesday. There is usually a considerable number of villages surrounding the great towns, and not unfrequently the citizens reckon upon thirty or forty of whose pleasures they expect to partake. Every Sunday is a

dancing day in France through the summer months, and they are so fond of this amusement that the Monday also is dedicated to it by the giddy youth, who do little else than sleep in the morning and dance at night. Public dancing places are built in the vicinity of the towns, where a large area, covered with a natural or artificial awning, and provided with a moveable floor, is surrounded sometimes by a double row of boxes for the accommodation of the distinct companies; to these are added promenades planted with shrubs, and shaded; and here all the inhabitants indifferently resort to their pleasures.

It must be acknowledged that a people who find their amusement in exercises so healthy, so invigorating, and so little mischievous as these are, when not pursued to excess, are better entitled to the character of rational

and humane, than others, who take a delight in torturing and murdering by inches the animals that God has provided for our defence and our nourishment. Bull-baiting, bear-baiting, and cock-fighting, are neither good for the promotion of health, nor for the improvement of the social feelings; they are calculated rather to brutalize the human race. Would it could be said, that in none of the amusements of the French there entered inhumanity and cruelty! They have one to the account of which these must be charged: a cock, a hen, or a duck, is hung up by the legs, so high that by leaping they can reach it. The lads, and the lasses too, of the lowest orders, we may well presume, (and to the shame of the tender sex be it spoken), are blindfolded, and starting from a fixed distance with a sabre in their hand, aim at the poor animal, and ex-

deavour to cut off its head. The person who succeeds becomes possessor of the bird, and bears it off in triumph to furnish a supper for his friends. This is a pastime which belongs to the province of Hainault, and ought not to be charged to the account of the French. Drunkenness was a vice little known in France before the revolution ; it was rare to see a man, either in the higher or lower circles of life, in a state of intoxication. In the inferior circles the common amusement was dancing, to qualify them for which they drank enough to make them gay, but not enough to make them stupid ; and the better sorts who were free enough in circulating the bottle, drank the wine with their meals, and after the desert finished the repast with a cup of coffee. This still continues to be their practice ; and they often express their surprise, how crea-

tures formed for society, and capable of enjoying its sweets, and especially a people so capable of rational conversation as the English, can allow themselves to lose all its relish, and plunge themselves into broils and mischief for a gratification so brutal. A material change has taken place in the lower orders, who have been taught by the Austrian prisoners and new subjects to smoke tobacco and drink beer, both of which are now consumed in large quantities, particularly by the soldiery, and a great deal of intoxication is the consequence. This may also in part be attributed to the dissipation that followed in the train of liberty.

All religious feasts were originally abolished in France, but by the concordat the four principal ones were revived by order of government, which neither knows nor acknowledges any

other. The decades have been wholly set aside, and the new calendar would have given place to the old one at the same time, but for the difficulty that was apprehended from all public acts and private contracts having borne for so long a time the dates of the republican almanack. But the old calendar will appear in all the acts of state from the beginning of the present year (1806). Since the renovation of religious days and religious ceremonies, the fanatical and idle part of the people have professed to believe, that the holy Father was led by necessity to consent that the rest of their feasts should remain suppressed, and that it is their duty to respect their saints by idleness and diversion, rather than their family by industry and labour. Many more of the feasts therefore are observed by the priests and some of the people, and especially in the Low Coun-

tries. So much devotion, or shall we rather say so much idleness and diversion? must needs have a very sensible effect on the labouring and manufacturing part of the community. The price of labour is always low, but it is rendered so much less productive by these perpetual interruptions, that it would not be possible for the people to subsist without a frugality that keeps pace with their sloth. Had we not already seen the causes why manufactures do not flourish in France, we might find an adequate cause in this.

CHAPTER XXI.

*French Economy—Vegetable Stews and Soups
—National Prejudices—National Character
of the English—Feeding of Cattle—Econo-
my of Fuel.*

NECESSITY is the mother of invention, and it has been so in a conspicuous manner in the French kitchen, where a small quantity of provision is made to assume a respectable figure, and the simple fruits of the earth are cooked in a thousand forms. Independent of the necessity arising from poverty, their religion enjoins on them a frequent abstinence from meat. Fish is so scarce and dear in the time of war, particularly in the interior, that it is not possible for the generality of the people to taste it, and they are not ac-

quainted with the variety of ways in which we make up our flour into puddings. If then their tables are spread on a meagre day, it must be with vegetables, and vegetable soups, which they prepare in a superior manner. Much as the Englishman may laugh at the soup-meagre and sallads of the French, when his table is before him, loaded with huge pieces of beef, and fenced round with smiling goblets of ale, it were much to be wished, for the happiness of our middling and lower orders, that some of the French economy could be introduced into their families.

Vegetables are generally considered by us as a relish for our meat rather than as a source of nourishment to our bodies; but nothing is more certain, than that vegetables, when properly dressed, afford good and nourishing juices, and of themselves are able to

maintain the force of a strong man. What but they, sometimes with a proportion of grain, and sometimes without, give strength to the horse, and bulk and fatness to the ox? and what but they give nourishment to the other animals, who become themselves the food of man? When vegetables are boiled in water till their best juices are extracted, and in that state presented upon our tables, it is not wonderful that their grosser particles afford us little or no nourishment; but when stewed in their own moisture, with the addition of a small quantity of butter, they contain more nourishment than the over-boiled meat upon which we often feed. The different mixtures of vegetables seasoned with herbs and spices, furnish a variety of pleasant food; and, if well stewed and then boiled into a soup by a skilful cook, are not to be distinguished from soups

in which a quantity of meat has been boiled ; especially if mixed with peas, rice, French beans, vermicelli, or other such things. This will be confessed by all travellers on the continent, on whose minds the caricatures of Hogarth have not made too deep an impression.

National prejudices are usually strong, and those which distinguish the Englishman are perhaps as powerful as any that have ever existed, notwithstanding the contiguity of his residence to the continent, and the frequent visits he makes to it. It may be said, “ they are so with reason, for the Englishman no where finds the comfort and family happiness, which he sees at home.” And this is certainly true. No nation has given so complete a finish to life, (if so we may be permitted to express the idea), as the English have done ; and this no doubt

is the cause of that strong national character for which the English are famed by foreigners, and which they acknowledge to be the greatest happiness of our nation. It is the bond of union, it is the rallying point of our countrymen. Wherever they are found, they love to see English goods, and English faces, and we may add English characters too, and, knowing well their worth, they think them cheap at any price. By this means English manufactures have become known, and well known too, in all parts of the world, and their value is appreciated by the other nations. Frenchmen have observed, "If we could have among us so strong a national character as you have among you, France would eclipse all the world in a few years in power and in wealth; and would do it, not by conquests, which may be lost soon after they are

acquired, but, on the surer basis of worth and respect." But the Frenchman is as much too pliant, and too little attached to his country and its produce, as the Englishman is too stubborn, and too unwilling to learn from another. For certainly there is no country that has not some virtue in it, which, if adopted by our own, might render us still more perfect in national felicity. If life could be rendered more sweet, and the hardness of the times, the common subject of complaint, in some measure removed, it would be of little consequence from what source the cause of it arose. And certainly it might be so in many cases, if the best use were made of the bountiful provisions of nature.

Upon the continent, not in France and Flanders only, but also in Holland, the economy of provision is extended to the cattle. The wife of our modern

farmer would doubtless think her time ill employed in making vegetable soups for her cows ; but no day in summer or in winter is allowed to pass there, without a trough of soup being given to these animals in the morning, and it is frequently given in the evening also. It is made up of different ingredients, according to the season of the year ; and, whatever may be said of the summer months, when there is an abundance of moist food in the fields, it must be highly useful in the winter season, when their food is dry, and furnishes but little milk. A root, which resembles a turnip in its colour, and a large thick carrot in its form, is what gives it its chief strength in the winter : the chaff and sweepings of the barns are boiled with it, and sometimes a quantity of hay or straw. In the spring, when food becomes most scarce, the women collect the thistles, nettles,

and long grass that grow up in the hedges and ditches, and also the weeds that are gathered out of the corn when it is cleaned. It is common for the day labourers to keep a cow with little or no land to feed it on. It is fed in this frugal way, the wife and children providing the victuals; and thus the markets are supplied with a considerable quantity of butter and cheese even in winter. They give bread to their horses, when they travel, either in waggons or diligences. This is made of rye without fermentation, and is esteemed more profitable and heartening, than grain in an unmanufactured state.

The general economical principle of the French, is to prepare by fire, all the food for themselves, and a great deal for their cattle, and they scarcely ever eat any thing but what is hot, for heat with the food assists the di-

gestion, and of itself even adds to its nourishment. They use the same economy in their fuel. Most of their cooking is done by charcoal, a very small quantity of which, burnt in stoves, built for the purpose, is sufficient to keep victuals boiling for a long time. Their coals also are well husbanded. They are sifted, so as to separate from them the dust, which is mixed with water incorporated with a thick strong clay, and then beaten hard into an iron mould, and made like an oblong brick. When dry, these bricks become perfectly hard, and make an excellent and durable fire. The worst of coal-dust, such as abounds in our midland counties, will in this way burn very pleasantly.

CHAPTER XXII.

Management in Farm-houses—Large Gardens—Apoplexies and sudden Deaths rare—Wolves, Foxes—Beer, Wines, Brandy—Weights and Measures.—Money.

THERE is a striking difference altogether in the management of the farms of France and those of England, nor is it hardly credible at how small an expense the families of the farmers are maintained. A vegetable soup, a dish of stewed vegetables, with sometimes some slices of fat pork in it, a piece of cheese-curd, and plenty of bread, composed half of wheat and half of rye, is the usual dinner of the farmer's family. And in the evening they feed heartily and cheerfully upon a large bowl of sallad, a vegetable stew and bread, or upon a milk soup. Cold vic-

tuals cannot satisfy the appetite like warm food, and never produces the same sensation of refreshment. Heat itself seems to contribute a satisfaction, and doubtless the body is not obliged to furnish so much of its natural warmth when hot, as when cold victuals are to be digested. Foreigners rarely eat any cold food.

The farmer therefore is careful to provide himself with a large garden, and to keep it stored with a good provision, and regular supply of vegetables, for the winter as well as the summer months. His fruit also is valuable to him; for apples, pears, &c. baked and eaten with bread, often constitute the evening's repast. These are refreshing, wholesome, and nourishing. It is on these accounts that convents were always provided with a spacious garden, well laid out, and planted with the best fruit trees,

and with vegetables in great abundance. It may even be doubted whether the gardens did not supply both to them and to the farmers the half of the food which they consumed. The poor labourer pursues the same economical system, and never sups, after the fatigues of the day, but on a hot dish. It may be thought that their labourers cannot do so much work as ours. This is the case of the manufacturers and artizans, but the cause is not in the want of force but of skill, in the habit of indolence, and little spirit of industry that is among them. But it certainly is not true of the labourers in the field. They are accustomed, like ours, to a slow regular pace and method of work; they go steadily on, and are not deficient in the sum of their labour. And surely their warm vegetable and milk diet must give more mois-

ture and more strength to their bodies, than cold bread, or bread and cheese.

It is not foreign from the subject to remark here, that apoplexies and sudden deaths are seldom known in France, and indeed in no country are so common as in England, where perhaps the largest quantity of strong animal food is eaten, and the smallest use is made of vegetables. May we not presume that such gross feeding fills the body too full of thick blood, which meeting sometimes with obstructions in its circulation, occasions these events. The same danger does not seem to exist when the blood is kept clear, and more free in its circulation, by a larger supply of vegetable, and a smaller proportion of animal juices.

Their farm houses are not built for pleasure, but in a way suitable to their use; and the out-buildings together

with the house generally form a square, in the centre of which is the yard, where every thing is shut up safe and warm in the night. The cause which rendered such security necessary has been in a great measure removed from France; namely, the ravages that were formerly made by the wolves. It is seldom that any of them are seen in the northern departments; never except in the winter, when they are driven from the forests by the want of food. In Champagne, and the province of the Ardennes, where the forests are large, they are still pretty numerous; and when hunger obliges them to travel from home, they commit great depredations. It sometimes happens that they go mad, when the effect of their rage is dreadful, and almost certain death to those who happen to approach them. A reward is paid by the government for every one that is killed; for a

female the reward is double of what is given for a male. While the writer was at Verdun, which was during the winter, a week seldom passed, and sometimes not two days, without the skins of them being brought in to be sold to the furriers. They have also foxes of a very large size, not a great deal less indeed than the wolf, but by no means mischievous.

The people of the Netherlands, as well as those of the northern departments of France, drink a great deal of beer which is nourishing, though not so pleasant in its taste as ours, and it is not intoxicating. In Flanders the heads and feet of cows and calves are boiled in the liquor before it is put upon the malt, and not unfrequently a small calf entire, so that, containing a quantity of these animal juices, it is often glutinous, and even sticky. The farther we go south, the lighter the beer is

made, and at Paris it is perfectly bright, clear, and sparkling. The use of beer is become much more prevalent of late years in France. In Burgundy and Champagne it is more generally drank than wine. It is far more agreeable than the common wines, even to the taste of the inhabitants, and much less likely to disagree with them. The fact is, that the greater part of the wines raised on a spot, the aspect of which is not entirely southern, is made very poor, and are usually consumed within a twelvemonth after they are made; so that they are by no means wholesome, especially if taken in quantities.

The vines in a direct southern aspect supply the cellars of the rich, or afford wine for a foreign market; and nothing remains for the people at large but the produce of the unripened grapes, and the second running of the good ones, which an Englishman

would esteem little better than vinegar and water. The same is true of their brandies : we meet with very little good brandy in France : all that is good is made on its southern side and on the coast of the Mediterranean, and is mostly sold for exportation. What is made in the interior is either very weak, or strengthened by chemical preparations. The best French brandy, and perhaps the best of most other productions of the earth, is to be met with in England.

It is many years since the money, the weights, and the measures, both of surfaces and of solids, have been directed by the national assembly to be regulated upon the same rule ; namely, that of decimals. As a regulating principle for the measures, they have taken the ten millionth part of a quarter of a degree of a meridian, which they call a metre ; from this they rise by tenths,

and descend in the same proportion; so that all measurements are made in the most simple and most intelligible manner; and when once well understood, will facilitate the sale of their merchandize and calculations. But it is not an easy matter to persuade a people to change their old customs and ways; and although the government have taken every pains to establish their own calculations, they are not generally adopted, and least of all in the conquered countries, where they are rendered sufficiently unpopular by having been introduced from the French government.

In all public markets, and in the manufactories where duties are paid, the new weights and measures are used by necessity; but in the retail trade, though they are always kept on the counters, others, which are concealed

under it, are most frequently brought into use. A regulation of this kind had indeed become highly desirable, not only because the conquered countries had weights and measures peculiar to themselves, but because the provinces of France did not follow the same rule in their weights and measures. The weights also rise and descend by tenths, having for unity the weight of a centimetre cube of distilled water at the thawing degree, and this they call a dramme. All the new republican and imperial money bears likewise a decimal proportion to a livre, which itself contains ten double sous, or pence. The Napoleons, which have been coined since the coronation of Buonaparte, are gold pieces of ten, twenty, and forty livres. Their silver pieces are livres, two livres, and five livres, and they reckon downwards as low as the

hundredth part of a livre, which they call a centime. The old terms, sous and denier, are not known in the public offices ; they count only in livres and centimes.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Account of the Gendarmerie—Their Behaviour to the English Prisoners—Police—Original Intention and actual Power of that Body—Their Discipline.

THE institution of the gendarmerie is very ancient. It was originally designed as the body guard of the king, and was composed of gentlemen, or the sons of gentlemen, who were handsomely provided for in that capacity. Now the number of these men is greatly increased, and they are become the executive power of the realm. A brigade of them is stationed in every department. The brigadier, and other officers, remain in the town of the prefecture, and with them a body of from ten to twenty men; the rest are posted

in the towns and villages of the department, according to its population. They ought all to be furnished with good horses, though it happens that there are a few footmen in most of the brigades. The most important service which they render to the state is in what relates to the conscription, and the arrest of deserters and robbers. They also attend to keep the peace at all punishments and executions. It is their duty, in connexion with the civil police, (for we may consider them in the light of a military police,) to know every body that resides, or that is seen for any length of time, within the boundaries marked out for their inspection; and they are authorized to demand passports of every one they meet, and to take those into custody concerning whom any suspicion may arise. They are expected to look frequently, and especially in the even-

ings, into the public houses, in order that all passengers may be examined. Besides which, the publicans are compelled to make out, every evening, a list of the names, occupations, and places of abode of those who lodge in their houses, which they deliver at the mayor's office the following morning.

The gendarmes are ready to give assistance, when called upon, to quell disturbances and prevent mischief, where any is suspected to be intended. They have a regular communication with each other, and certain days are appointed for visiting the neighbouring brigades, when all the prisoners are forwarded in whatever direction they are to be sent. The unfortunate English have consequently fallen into their hands. In some instances our countrymen have been ill used by them; but it must be confessed, that in general they have met with humane and

liberal treatment. When the gendarmes have had to do with such as could pay, it was their interest to behave well; for the liberality of the English is highly spoken of in France; and in such cases as these, it may be presumed that liberality would not be restrained. If they were sent forward from brigade to brigade, the gendarme received nothing from his prisoner, having him under his care only a few hours, and then lodging him in the next prison. But the English have, in general, been indulged in taking one of them from the place where they were arrested, to the town where they were to be confined, and, in these cases, as it was an extra service, they were expected to pay, for a horseman six livres a day, and for a footman four, reckoning also the days of his return. These days are calculated by marches, which do not exceed fifteen miles for a

footman; so that the journey from Mons to Verdun, being reckoned at nine days, and as many to return, though the whole may be performed in ten, the author was required to pay three louis for the indulgence of having one of these for a companion, who was an intelligent man, and from whom he derived some of the information which is now communicated to the public.

The government is very scrupulous in the choice of these men. Most of them have served in the army, and distinguished themselves by their bravery and good behaviour, or else they belong to good families; and no man without the best of characters can obtain the rank of gendarme. Their discipline is strict, and embraces even their domestic economy. They have barracks appropriated to them in every department, and no one is allowed to

marry till the officer has received a good character of the intended bride, and given his approbation of the match in writing. A party of these is attached to every army, where they are also the executors of the law. The army of England, under general Soult, had a large party of them accompanying it, who were to have landed with the first detachment, and undertaken the grateful task of establishing liberty and good order in society amongst us. They have not yet rendered us this piece of service ; and as the people at large, in their own country, have long ridiculed the idea of the descent, though at one time they believed it to be seriously intended, we also may flatter ourselves in the hope, that our present good order will not be improved by their interference, nor the security of our property depend upon their exertions.

, In the outset of the revolution, and

agreeably to its original design, the police of the republic was under civil officers, who form a part of every municipal body ; and it is no wonder that the constituted authorities should desire to execute the laws by the hands of their own servants. Such a body of men as the gendarmes might be useful assistants, but officious directors. But since the government is changed from a republican to a military form, it may be presumed that the military has encroached upon the civil power, and left it no more than the shadow of authority, wherever it has been able to introduce its own. This is, indeed, the fact, and the consequence has been a high degree of jealousy and frequent misunderstandings between the generals and the magistrates, the former of whom are regarded with no friendly eye by the people. But as the power is in their hands, and

their chief is the interpreter as well as the fabricator of the laws, there is little question of what is the opinion of the civil magistrate. It was this circumstance that gave occasion to the author's escape. The justice of peace had directed him to be conducted, with his papers sealed up, by a gendarme, as expeditiously as possible, to the prefet of the department in which he had resided. The gendarme was furious when the sealed papers were presented to him, with the instructions of the justice. "How did the justice dare," said he, "to seal up the papers of an English prisoner of war? he knew what to do with an Englishman without the directions of the civil power." And he refused, under such circumstances, to take charge of the prisoner.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Echaufeurs, or Warmers.

AN occurrence has lately taken place in Flanders, which is not generally known in England, and may be mentioned to show the disposition of the present government of France. An alarm of personal danger has been raised amongst them, by the arrest of a considerable number of persons, upon a pretext that is not satisfactory to the public. A company of men, who are known by the name of *echaufeurs*, or warmers, have infested the low countries for some time past. The sons of some good families are supposed to be connected with them, who, being dissipated and extravagant, are not supplied by their parents with the

adequate means of indulgence, and have allied themselves to characters notoriously bad, in order to make depredations on the property of others. It is said, that they are very numerous; that they are dispersed in different directions, keep up a regular correspondence, and are united as in a common cause. Their custom has been, to beset a house in the country, sometimes in large bodies; and having gained admittance, to hold the feet of the master, mistress, or other principal person they found, close to the fire, or over it in the flame, in order to make them declare in what place their most valuable property was concealed; and when they had taken it, they decamped. These circumstances have actually taken place in the neighbourhood of Brussels; and some persons have suffered long and severe fits of illness, both from the

fright, and from the wounds they have received. It is now nearly two years since the gendarmerie began to take these people up; and it has been pretended, that the ramifications of this evil spread so wide, that the most perfect secrecy was necessary, in order to insure the arrest of the remainder of them; of course, none have yet been brought to their trial. Many respectable housekeepers, of good character, have been arrested and detained in prison; some of them of extensive property, who cannot be supposed to be connected with this infamous band. In the month of August it was currently reported, that the persons arrested amounted to four hundred, all of whom remained without evidence, or proof of guilt, within the walls of their prison. It must be presumed, that some other than that of the

cchaufage, is the cause of such numerous arrests; and it threw for a time a damp on the minds of the people of the low country, to whom this affair seems to have been confined. A proof, amongst many others, that the government of France gives an account of its conduct only when it pleases, and in the manner which is most agreeable to itself.

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